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The role of civic education in developing a sense of national identity:

Action research in a Hong Kong primary school

A Thesis by

Sum-cho Po

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Abstract

There is a major concern in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region that civic education in schools is not able to prepare committed and active citizens for the national community after her re-unification with the People's Republic of China. To develop practical understanding for informing and improving teachers' practice in this marginalized but increasingly important curriculum area at the primary level, this study investigated how civic education, implemented via a primary school subject, General Studies, could contribute to the development of children's sense of national identity. Through action research into the development and implementation of a school-based General Studies unit, this study examined how the General Studies teachers perceived citizenship and civic education and its impact on children's civic learning. It also investigated the major problems and issues that emerged in adopting a permeation approach to civic education.

The participative research involved the head teacher, all the General Studies teachers and in particular four teachers who worked in collaboration with the researcher in developing and implementing the school-based civic education project for 145 Primary 5 pupils in the pilot school. It employed multiple methods to investigate the development of the project, including: surveys, interviews, lesson observations, participant observations in preparatory meetings, analysis of journals and curriculum documents.

The findings indicated that the school-based project achieved limited success in fostering children's sense of national identity. Difficulties encountered in the development and implementation of the project were mainly related to teachers' understanding of the concept of citizenship and civic education and their lack of experience in promoting civic learning in the primary school. But the participative research did lend itself to better understanding of some very important issues related to the teaching and learning of civic education, such as teachers' perceptions of citizenship, civic education and the civic mission of the schools, the adoption of a permeation approach to civic education via the General Studies curriculum, the teaching of civic values through General Studies topics, and the development of a participative culture in the primary schools. These should help to further develop the civic education curriculum in the HKSAR.

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Chapter I

Introduction

The study reported in this thesis investigates how teachers attempted to develop children's sense of national identity through a school-based civic education project in a primary school in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). This study adopted an action research methodology to monitor and evaluate the project. It aimed to develop a practical understanding of how civic education was developed and implemented through a primary school subject, General Studies, in the school. In the HKSAR, primary education is part of the formal schooling compulsory for all children from 6 to 12 years of age.

There has been an urgent need to develop students' sense of national identity in the HKSAR since her unification with the People's Republic of China (PRC). Surveys conducted both pre- and post-1997 showed that adolescents in Hong Kong tended to identify more with their local community than with the national community. According to the study of Wong and Shum (1996), nearly two-thirds of the respondents identified with their local community, Hong Kong. Less than one-third of them identified themselves as



Chinese. The *Study on civic awareness and moral values of youth* (Commission on Youth, 1998) also found that adolescents in Hong Kong identified more with their local community than with the national community, the People's Republic of China (PRC). The findings showed that 88% of the respondents felt that they belonged to Hong Kong. Only 46% of the adolescents surveyed felt that they belonged to the PRC. Another survey on the civic awareness and attitude of young people in post-1997 Hong Kong conducted in 2001 (Wong and Shum, 2002) showed that 64.2% of the respondents still identified themselves as Hongkongese. Only 29.2% identified themselves as Chinese.

South China Morning Post, an English newspaper in the HKSAR, reported similar survey results conducted by Breakthrough, a youth organization, on 1 October 2001 and concluded, "This survey's findings are in line with other studies which revealed that most Hong Kong Chinese still put their Hong Kong identity before their Chineseness." The editorial further commented that despite the calls for a fostering of Chinese nationalism among our young people since the handover, "the SAR education authorities have not made any high-profile moves to heed those calls" because of the sensitivity of such attempts.

The cry for a more vigorous civic education programme focusing on the development of students' patriotic sentiments and national consciousness has been clear and loud. The Chief Executive has repeatedly stressed his vision of the role of education, in particular, civic education in schools, in enhancing students' understanding and identification with their mother country. In his speech at the Gala Banquet of the International Forum of Leaders in Higher Education presented on 4 July 1997, he said:

we must step up civic education so that our youngsters will have a better understanding of China, the Chinese culture and history, the concept of 'one country, two systems' and the Basic Law. Through better understanding, we hope to inculcate in them the passion, and the concern for China, the pride of being Chinese, and a constant readiness to contribute towards the well-being of not just Hong Kong but the entire country (Tung Chee Hwa, 1997).

Four years later, when he spoke at the opening ceremony of Youth Summit on 14 September 2002, he also reiterated the importance of fostering the Chinese identity of our young people and developing their understanding of the motherland. He stated:

Following our reunification in 1997 to become the first special administrative region of China after a century's separation with the motherland, we, people of Hong Kong, and our young people in particular, should affirm our Chinese identity and get a better understanding of the country and the root of our heritage. To overcome challenges brought about by globalisation, our young people should have a cosmopolitan outlook. How to enable our young generation 'to have a foothold in Hong Kong, to have the whole country in mind and the whole world in view' is indeed something we should give deep thought to (Tung Chee Hwa, 2002).

The Chief Executive's call for the development of young people's national identity and pride was echoed by the press and other leaders in society, especially those belonging to the pro-Beijing camp. For instance, the editorial of Wen Wei Po (a pro-Beijing newspaper) on 1 October 2002 stressed that an outstanding theme for celebrating the 53rd anniversary of the founding of the PRC was to strengthen national consciousness among Hong Kong people. The editorial of the Commercial News (another pro-Beijing newspaper) on 10 November 2000 also urged the promotion of civic consciousness and the strengthening of social cohesion in the HKSAR.

Even an independent newspaper, Sing Pao, stressed in her editorial on 1 October 2001 that schools in Hong Kong should begin to promote children's national consciousness in primary one. Teachers should make use of every opportunity to achieve the above aim. The development of pupils' identification with their mother country, the PRC had become a major concern of the HKSAR. Bloom (1990), in attempting to investigate the major dynamic in nation building, argued that "mass mobilization is possible when the individuals in the mass share the same identification" (p.55).

In studying the nations of the contemporary world, Smith (1995, p.2) observed "we find ourselves caught in a maelstrom of conflicts over political identities and ethnic fragmentation". The HKSAR is no exception. As reported by the press, there was sharp division of opinions among Hong Kong people on a wide range of issues in the post-colonial period. These³ included sensitive political issues, such as whether the HKSAR should follow Beijing in banning the Falun Gong, a religious group classified as sect in the mainland (Hong Kong Mail, 31-1-2001 & 1-2-2001), the abode policies for the mainlanders born in Hong Kong before their parents acquired residency (SCMP, 11-1-2002 & 30-3-2002), the electoral system for the second term of office for the Chief Executive (SCMP, 20-2-2002 & 1-3-2002), the ministerial system adopted by the SAR

government (SCMP, 18-4-2002), and the reduction of salary of the government employees (Ming Pao, 14-3-2002, the Sun, 23-3-2002). They also included minor issues such as whether the Legislature should propose a vote of thanks to the departing Chief Secretary for Administration, Mrs. Anson Chan (Taikung Pao, 24-3-2001 & the Sun, 24-3-2001). There seemed to be the emergence of two opposing camps in the territory, the pro-China and the pro-democracy camp. Heated debates on controversial issues in the Legislature and massive demonstrations against the government became an outstanding feature of the local community. The HKSAR seemed to be becoming a more divided society.

The sharp division of opinions among Hong Kong people could be attributed to the difference in their identification with the local and national community. The results of a survey on young people's civic awareness and attitudes conducted by Wong and Shum (2002) showed that among those who identified themselves as Hongkongese, 80% responded that they considered personal freedom more important than the interests of the state whereas among those who identified themselves as Chinese, 37.5% expressed that they valued more the interests of the state than their personal freedom. It is vital that a common national identity and shared values towards society and the nation should be

developed among Hong Kong people. As pointed out by Mommsen (1993, p.14), national identity "can be, and often is, a source of stability in the midst of political disorientation" but he cautioned that it should be used in a constructive way.

In response to the strong demand for nation building and political integration with the mother country, the education authority, educators, schools and teachers of the HKSAR made various attempts to promote civic education in schools since 1997. At the central level, moral and civic education was made one of the key tasks and an essential learning experience that students were entitled to have throughout all stages of schooling in the new *Basic Education Curriculum Guide: Building on Strengths* (Curriculum Development Council [CDC], 2002a) and "national identity" one of the five priority values to be inculcated. But the guide did not suggest any change in the curriculum approach to civic education. This important learning experience was still to be provided through the permeation or integrated subject approach in primary schools as recommended in the *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (CDC, 1996). To address students' needs in this area of learning, the Curriculum Development Council (2000) proposed a new curriculum framework for the subject General Studies and included *the Chinese Culture and National Identity* as one of the six strands in the subject curriculum.

This new General Studies for Primary School Curriculum Guide was published in 2002 and would be implemented in three different phases in the next 10 years.

At the school level, civic education has been developed and implemented in a very diverse manner. Not being a separate subject in the primary school curriculum, civic education programmes in schools vary greatly in their goals, purpose, nature, content and mode of teaching. Some schools allocate a timetable period per week to civic education. Some adopt a cross-curricular approach integrating the formal and informal curriculum in promoting civic learning in school. But the majority claim that they follow a permeation approach and implement civic education through the different subjects in the formal curriculum. As a result, the impact of these programmes on children may also vary considerably.

Despite the dissatisfaction expressed by the general public on the inadequacies of the schools in promoting civic learning, there were no systematic studies conducted in this area of learning at the primary level. With the strong and growing demand for strengthening civic education in schools and a new emphasis on fostering children's national consciousness and identification with their nation through the civic education

curriculum, the challenge for civic education teachers became even greater. In addition, the stress on civic education in school coincided with an era of change. "The world is undergoing unprecedented changes, and Hong Kong is no exception" (Education Commission, 2000, p.3). With the advent of a knowledge-based society and the rapidly changing post-modern world, drastic curriculum reforms aiming at promoting "Learning to Learn" were introduced to the basic education in the HKSAR (CDC, 2000). To face the challenges of the 21st Century, teachers were urged to adopt more innovative and creative teaching approaches to prepare pupils to be life-long learners. It was argued that learning in school should be pupil-centred, interactive, participatory and pupil-directed.

How do primary schools and teachers respond to the continual calls to strengthen pupils' sense of national identity? How can the school's civic education programme contribute to this process? What impetus and constraints are there in the school curriculum and in society which affect the development of civic education in primary schools and in particular the development of children's sense of national identity? These are the common concerns of the education authority, civic educators and teachers. They constitute the main focus of this study.

This study is part of the Quality Education Fund (QEF) project, Enhancement Scheme for the Implementation of Citizenship Education in Hong Kong Primary Schools, initiated by the Centre for Citizenship Education (CCE) of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd). The QEF project have developed and implemented from September 1999 to July 2001; it aimed to address the needs of primary schools in promoting civic education in the HKSAR. The overall objectives of the project were:

1. to enhance primary teachers' understanding of civic education;
2. to promote the adoption of a child-centred and a participatory approach in implementing civic education in the local primary schools;
3. to develop quality civic education resources which included school-based civic education packages and web-based multi-media resources;
4. to organize exchange programmes to the Mainland and other Asian-Pacific regions.

The final outcomes of the project were 13 school-based civic education teaching packages which were to be distributed to all 104 participating schools.

To facilitate the development of quality civic education resources, the project team worked with 13 pilot schools in designing, implementing and evaluating their school-based teaching packages on themes related to civic education. The 13 pilot

schools joined the Scheme on a voluntary basis. To take part in the project, each pilot school represented by the head teacher had to sign a formal agreement with the project team which stipulated that the project team had to provide all the necessary support, including assigning an adviser to each pilot school, for developing a school-based civic education teaching package in collaboration with the teachers of the schools. In return, the pilot school and the participant teachers nominated by the school had to participate in all the learning and evaluative activities offered or requested by the project team in connection with the development and implementation of the project.

The school-based General Studies unit under study was developed by one of the pilot schools aiming at promoting children's sense of national identity. It was based on a Primary 5 (P.5) (i.e. Year 5, age 10 to 11) unit in the General Studies curriculum, "The HKSAR and the mainland of China: Geography and History". A new title, "The Best of China" was adopted to reflect the objective of the unit. The researcher, who was assigned to the school as an adviser, was responsible for collaborating with the 4 participant teachers in designing, implementing and evaluating the thematic unit and developed a school-based civic education package for distribution to all participating schools of the QEF project.

The development of the unit began in mid-May 2000 after all the participant teachers had completed a series of workshops and seminars on approaches to civic education and the production of teaching packages. Adopting an action research methodology, the researcher intended to involve the participant teachers in reflecting on their own practices throughout the process of the development and generated rich descriptions on how the unit was developed and implemented. The detailed information obtained helped to inform their practice and identify any inadequacies in the design and approaches of the teaching package. Using the results of the study, the researcher was able to collaborate with the participant teachers in continually refining the package and discuss with them how the unit could be more effectively implemented in the next year.

The Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of ten chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapters II and III review the literature related to this study. Chapter II examines the different conceptions of citizenship, theories related to the development of national identity and the civic mission of schools. Chapter III reviews the different curriculum and pedagogical approaches to citizenship education in selected countries and regions. They include the

United Kingdom, the People's Republic of China, the United States and the HKSAR.

Their experience in the preparation of young citizens helps to illustrate how the different approaches to citizenship education are translated into classroom practices in different contexts. Chapter IV identifies four major groups of questions arising from the literature review and discusses the purpose, the research questions and the importance of the study. Chapter V is on the methodology employed in this study. It describes and explains the adoption of the action research design for this study, the instruments constructed and the data collection procedures. It also discusses essential questions arising from the literature review in connection with the methodology employed and some of the difficulties regarding data collection and how they were overcome.

Chapters VI to VIII present the results of the study. Chapter VI examines the initiation, planning and development of the school-based civic education project. Results of the interview with the head teacher and the first interviews with all the participant teachers, the questionnaire survey for all General Studies teachers and field notes of the preparatory meetings are analysed. The implementation of the project is reviewed in Chapter VII based on the rich data gathered from the observations of the trial lessons and follow-up interviews with the participant teachers. Chapter VIII evaluates the learning

process and the outcomes of the project. The outcomes to be evaluated include both the learning outcomes attained by pupils, i.e. the development of their identification with the PRC and the product of the school-based project, the teaching package. Data for analysis and discussion were drawn from participant teachers' and pupils' journal writing, pupils' feedback to the questionnaire survey on the teaching of the trial lessons, the pre- and post-test results on pupils' views and perceptions of the PRC and the content analysis of the final version of the teaching package. Chapter IX discusses the results of the action research with reference to the four groups of questions identified in Chapter IV. Finally, Chapter X discusses the experience of the researcher in participating in this action research and summarizes the lessons to be learned from the school-based project in promoting children's sense of national identity in a HKSAR primary school.

Chapter II

Literature Review I

Citizenship and National Identity

Despite the rich literature on civic education, the concept of citizenship remains problematic to most researchers and educators studying this essential area of learning in the school curriculum (Carr, 1991; Heater, 1991; McLaughlin, 1992; Porter, 1996; Steenbergen, 1994; Beiner, 1995; Tsang, 1996). This chapter begins by clarifying this controversial concept and follows with a detailed examination of how citizenship is being construed in the Chinese societies, including the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Then the chapter reviews the debates on the complex and dynamic relationship between citizenship and national identity in different cultural contexts and their significance to and impact on nation building. Different theories on fostering a sense of national identity and their implications for civic education are discussed.

Different Conceptions of Citizenship

The fact that citizenship remains a contested concept is attributed mainly to the different

philosophical traditions from which the concept is developed, the different social and cultural contexts in which citizenship is practised, the rapidly changing notion of community, nation and state, and in particular, the possible demise of the concept of state in the twentieth century. Ignatieff (1995, p.53) said that citizenship is “a myth”. To him, the two conflicting images of citizenship are equally haunting. On the one hand, citizenship “is the ideal of a public realm in which through participation the citizen transcends the limits of his private interest and becomes, in his deliberation with others, what Aristotle said man truly was – a political animal.” However, “a fanciful conception of man and its political nature” leads one to view the public realm as a necessary evil for providing the necessary institutional arrangements to protect and enhance private freedom. Consequently, Ignatieff pointed out that we are torn “between man the citizen and economic man” and there is a need for reconciling the two competing political ideals: “maximum freedom in the private sphere coupled with collective deliberation over the content of justice and the shape of moral value” (p.74).

Pocock (1995) identified another myth of citizenship: a concept unique to the West. The Athenian ideal of a community of citizens is found in Aristotle’s *Politics*. Based on such an ideal, the development of a democratic system is often considered to be the common

good to be pursued by every society (Dewey, 1916; Almond & Verba, 1963; Lo & Man, 1996). Accordingly, Carr (1991) observed that one's understanding of citizenship depends on how one views democracy. He identified two models of democracy, namely the "Moral Model" and the "Market Model". The former is to be understood as a moral ideal, constituted of fundamental human values of self-fulfilment, self-determination and equality. "It is a way of life in which individuals are able to realize their human capacities by participating in the life of their society" (Carr, 1991, p.378). The latter, however, is seen as a specific set of arrangements, which includes civic, legal and political rights and duties established in a particular polity. "It helps to protect the freedom of individuals to pursue their private interests with minimal state interference" (Carr, 1991, p.379). But as pointed out by Porter (1996), in considering what should constitute "citizenship", we have to come back to the Moral view for our final judgment if any disputes or disagreements arise.

There have been numerous attempts to define citizenship. Marshall (1950), who is quoted by many for his authoritative view on citizenship, defined it as a body of rights and obligations which have gradually emerged and extended from the civil to the political and eventually to the social domain in the past three centuries. But the universalistic,

evolutionary and progressive nature of Marshall's concept has come under severe criticism. Scholars such as Giddens (1982) and Mann (1987) demonstrated clearly that the development of citizenship varies greatly among countries. It results from a combination of factors which includes social class relationships, ethnic composition, and inter-state relationships between the individual countries. They also find that there is intrinsic disagreement about the three forms of citizenship. They observe that, basically, the establishment and extension of the citizenship rights is achieved through struggle rather than granted from above.

Following the Western tradition, Heater (1990) offered five key perspectives in viewing citizenship. They are: identity, civil citizenship; political citizenship; social citizenship; and civic virtue. McLaughlin (1992) adopted an incremental view in conceptualizing citizenship. It is characterized by four features, namely "the identity conferred, the virtues required, the extent of political involvement by the individual, and the social prerequisites deemed necessary". Based on a similar line of thinking, Steenbergen (1994) summarized three essential characteristics of citizenship: first, it means full participation in public life (not only in political life), second, it refers to an "office" and the relevant qualifications for a person both to govern and to be governed and third, a body of rights and obligations

in relation to the former two characteristics.

Porter (1996, p.3) disagreed with McLaughlin's incremental view. Instead, he argued that citizenship is a quality. Its development is governed by a set of conditions which comprises three essential components: "the notion of citizenship as status, the notion of citizenship as volition, and the notion of citizenship as competence". Cogan (2000) tried to elaborate on the attributes of citizenship. Based on an understanding that the attributes will vary greatly according to the nature of different political systems, he was able to classify them into five categories: a sense of identity; the enjoyment of certain rights; the fulfillment of corresponding obligations; a degree of interest and involvement in public affairs, and an acceptance of basic societal values.

In the above conceptions of citizenship, there is one key feature which has received increasing attention from scholars. It is the notion of identity. Ichilov (1998, p.11) observed that the classical definition, which stresses "a balance or fusion between rights and obligations", was being replaced by the recent definition which focuses more on "the affinity and identity dimensions of citizenship". The shift reflects the enormous political, economic, technological and cultural changes in recent years. The contemporary political

culture, described by Gibbins (1989, p.14) as “pluralistic, anarchic, disorganised, rhetorical, stylised, and ironic”, coupled with the emergence of the information and consumer economy, the development of sharp conflicts between public and private spheres and identity politics in society, has been rapidly eroding the basis of citizenship, namely rationality, solidarity and legitimation (Wexler, 1990). As a result, individual identity as well as that of societies, is in a danger of becoming fragmented. Collective identities which are vital for solidary citizen action are difficult to foster. Lawson and Scott (2002, p.1) observed that “there now exist a multiplicity of communities of which an individual can be a member and with which he or she can identify”. The basic problem of national citizenship, according to Beiner (1995), is that it is being simultaneously attacked by two opposing but inter-related forces, the globalising and localising pressures. As pointed out by Habermas (1995, p.255-256), “This process exacerbates the conflict between the universalistic principles of constitutional democracies on the one hand and the particularistic claims of communities to preserve the integrity of their habitual ways of life on the other”. However, many scholars also recognize that with the development of the global economy and supranational structures, new and more universal concepts of citizenship are being advocated (Robertson, 1990; Soysal, 1994). In these conceptions, a global consciousness is emphasised and human rights are given an expanded role to play

in defining citizenship.

The foregoing analysis suggests that there is no single theory of citizenship in the West.

Different models have been proposed to define and clarify the content and structure of citizenship. The common components may include status, identity, rights and obligations, civic virtues, competence and participation. In deliberating on the meaning of the concept, we have to consider the great changes in various domains in society, and the multiple and expanding levels and dimensions of civic participation which stretch from the local, through the national to the regional and eventually to the global. Hence, the development of identity, in particular national identity, has become a major issue in citizenship education.

The Chinese Conception of Citizenship

There is an absence of the Athenian ideal of citizenship in Chinese societies. Unlike the Western conception which stresses a contractual relationship between the individual and society, citizenship in the China, according to Lo & Man (1996, p.xviii), "has been intimately linked with one's lineage, as defined by blood, which forms the basis of

community (or nation) and may induce sentiment and loyalty". Based on this conception of citizenship, there is less concern for the rights of citizens than with their obligations in China. For example, the *Handbook for Chinese Citizens* (*Guangming ribao*, 1995) provided a long list of obligations which Chinese citizens are expected to carry out. They range from defending the unification of the mother country to practising birth control.

The *Handbook of the Five Stresses and Four Beauties* published by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League in 1983 also included the following directives:

1. to take the basic interests of the proletariat and people as the starting point and to persist in regarding the collective interests as more important than the personal interests;
2. to combine the collective and personal interests on the premise that the collective interests are guaranteed; and
3. to unconditionally subordinate the personal interests to the collective interests when the two are in contradiction with each other.

These handbooks did not apply to Hong Kong people but there was an equally strong emphasis in Hong Kong on duties and responsibilities in perceiving the relationship between the individual and the state in the local community. Lau (1982) described the

political culture of Hong Kong before 1980s as essentially “subject political culture”. In line with the political culture, the first *Guidelines on Civic Education for Schools* issued by the Curriculum Development Committee in 1985 stressed that schools should “renew their commitment to the preservation of social order and the promotion of civic awareness and responsibility” (p.1). The second *Guidelines on Civic Education for Schools (Guidelines)* published by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) in 1996 placed more emphasis on reflection and action and the study of controversial issues. However, this still acknowledged collectivism as a dominant social value in society and states that “self realization is best achieved in common good” (p.15). Though there was evidence that the political culture of Hong Kong was changing from a “subject” to a “participatory” political culture in the 1990s (Tsang, 1998), Lau and Kuan (1986) observed that it remained an “immature” one. The institutional means for effective civic participation was still not adequate. As a result, Tsang (1998, p.234) concluded, “The political component of citizenship is the most underdeveloped in Hong Kong”. Cuklanz and Wong (1999) analysed the ideological themes of the televised public service announcements (Announcement of Public Interest, APIs) produced by the Hong Kong Department of Information Services from 1970s to 1990s and found that “the civic person is nearly absent from the Fight Crime and human rights API campaigns in Hong Kong”

(p.105). As observed by Morris, et al (2000, p.259), “a sense of national identity based upon a homogeneous and totalizing sense of Chinese culture, morality and values” was being promoted in Hong Kong. Even after 1997, Morris pointed out that the emphasis of civic education in the HKSAR was still on “a totalizing conception of self-identity based upon a national cultural and moral agenda” (Morris, et al, 2000, p.260).

The bias towards a moral interpretation of citizenship is, in fact, closely linked to the Confucian tradition. Confucianism as a philosophy and an ideology which dominates most Chinese societies, focuses on the nurturing of a moral person but relatively neglects the development of a civic person. Ip (1996) argued that Confucianism, as compared with other idea systems, is definitely “this-worldly” with a heavy emphasis on collective values and interest. Primarily, the collectivism endorsed by Confucian is a familial collectivism. As a result, the principle of filial piety occupies a central position in the *ren-yi-li* normative structure of the Confucian moral framework. It dominates and defines all human relationships within the family and beyond. Consequently, a hierarchical structure prevails in all the basic institutions, such as family, society and state. Confucian familial collectivism becomes an inhibitor, both ideological and institutional, to the development of the civic person. Ideologically, it suppresses the ideas of rights and

equality and institutionally, it creates a structure which is unfavourable to the exercise of rights and the practice of equality.

With the predominance of the familial relationship in most Chinese societies, other significant institutions mediating between the family and the state are not easily developed. Powers and Kluver (1999) argued that the civil society, which is fundamental for the maintenance of a democratic system and the nurturing of the civility of a person, is largely underdeveloped in China. White (1993) also concluded in his empirical studies that “civil society” is only in its “embryonic” stage in this ancient nation. The state remains highly paternalistic and hierarchical. Without the opportunities for participating in state affairs as equals, individuals are deprived of a smooth transition from the personal moral self to the civic self (Ip, 1996). Moreover, in the Confucian culture, public interest and social harmony always take precedence over private interest. The notion of the rights of the individual is to a large extent nonexistent in the Confucian tradition. This explains why the western conception of citizenship had difficulties, in taking root and flourishing in most Chinese societies.

As a predominantly Chinese society, the HKSAR is under the influence of Confucianism.

But it was also a British colony for 150 years and the capitalistic and the Common Law system has been guaranteed for another 50 years. The culture of Hong Kong, as portrayed by Kwok (1997), is characterised by her “hybridity” and “marginality”. This is mainly the result of the “gap-ism”, a tradition practised widely in this “borrowed place, borrowed time” (Hughes, 1968). Being part of the Hong Kong culture, citizenship in Hong Kong is always in a state of flux and is comprised of contradictory ideas and practices originating from both the East and the West. The second *Guidelines on civic education in schools* (CDC, 1996, p.15) attempted to make them “mutually supportive and interdependent”. Is it possible? To what extent can we achieve not only a good mix, but a full integration of the two conceptions of citizenship?

Citizenship, National Identity and Nation Building

In the West, there has been heated debate on the compatibility between citizenship and national identity. As pointed out by Habermas (1995), there is intrinsic conflict between democratic citizenship and national identity in the contemporary world. To him, the changing meaning of the term “nation” has resulted in the gradual replacement of the ascriptive features by the acquired properties of one’s collective identity. Coupled with

the expansion of concept of citizenship to cover the status defined by civil rights, Habermas observed that citizens derive their identity more from participating actively in exercising their civil rights than from some common ethnic and cultural properties. Similarly Greenfield (1992) differentiated the nature of two kinds of membership in the national collective, namely "civic" and "ethnic". According to her, the former, which is basically open, voluntaristic and acquired, is considered to be more compatible with democratic citizenship.

Hobsbawn (1990) further asserted that nations play a subordinate role in our globalised world. It is commonly agreed that nations and national states are being attacked from different fronts and are weakened in performing their economic, political, cultural and military function as collectives (Rifkin, 1995; Greenfield, 1993; Hobsbawn, 1990). For Hobsbawn, the decline of nations and nation-states is irreversible. Even the ethnic unrest in 1990s represents only a temporary disruption in the real movement of history. It should not be considered as a rebirth of nationalism. Thus, the global identity instead of the national identity should be stressed.

On the other hand, Mommsen (1993) argued that nationalism has become a destructive

force in the last century. He noticed that nationalistic ideas have turned into “an aggressive agent of oppressive political domination” menacing world peace (p.8). The continuous conflicts among the Balkan states and the crisis in the Middle East are vivid examples demonstrating clearly how destructive nationalism is, as a political force, if it is not used intelligently. Smith (1995, p.3) pointed out that if “the ethnic and national identities remain(ed) highly charged”, they would become the greatest source of political unrest. MacIntyre (1995) also queried whether patriotism is a virtue or a vice and concluded that democratic citizenship and patriotism are deeply incompatible.

However, many maintain that the nations and national states are not in any sense declining (Janowitz, 1983; James, 1996). The breakdown of the Soviet Bloc into nation-states and the established practices in settling and handling of international issues and affairs in the late twentieth century are clear evidence that nation and nation states are still the norm in our global village. James (1996, p.xi) observed that “the call of nationalism resounds stronger than ever as people grapple with social change and the fragmentation of social identity. It is a time when the processes of globalism have brought to bear new emphases on the local, a time when the fragility of identity has highlighted our relationship to place and people”. Nation building remains one of the major human

endeavours in the postmodern society.

In China, the call of nationalism is strongest and most urgent. According to Zheng (1999, p.17), "throughout modern Chinese history, building a strong State was a consistent theme of Chinese nationalism, and waves of nationalistic movements led to the formation of a 'strong state complex' among social and political groups. Whenever the State was challenged, or people perceived that it was challenged, nationalism arose". The rise of "the new nationalism" in China since the 1980s can be attributed to both internal and external factors. Internally, many Chinese have lost faith in Marxism and Maoism and as a result, have become more doubtful about the political legitimacy of the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. Externally, with the end of the Cold War, China was for the first time pushed to the front of great power competition. To counter the great challenges and sometimes hostile and unfair treatment from the international community and to strengthen the political legitimacy of the regime at home, the Chinese government had to appeal to nationalism to reconstruct national identity among Chinese people. As a new member of the national family, there is a strong opinion both in the Mainland and in the local community that Hong Kong should pay due emphasis to the development of the national sentiment and identity in educating her young citizens. Hong Kong has taken

part in what Castells (1992, p.58) called “a nationalist project of self-affirmation of cultural/political identity in the world system” which is common among most Asian states.

It is evident that a sense of national identity is vital for nation building and political integration (McSweeney, 1999; James, 1996; Smith, 1995; Hill & Fee, 1995; Mommsen, 1993; Bloom, 1990). Smith (1995, p.195) stressed that the development of national identity is essential for any collectives in satisfying the “needs for cultural fulfillment, rootedness, security and fraternity” of those who inhabit a particular national state. He asserted that no other identities can substitute it in offering “the qualities of collective faith, dignity and hope” (Smith, 1995, p.159). Subsequently, he defined national identity as follows:

The continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations, and the identifications of individuals with that pattern and heritage and with its cultural elements. (Smith, 2001, p.18)

According to Bloom (1990, p.52), "*national identity* describes that condition in which a mass of people have made the same identification with national symbols - have internalised the symbols of the nation - so that they may act as one psychological group when there is a threat to, or the possibility of enhancement of, these symbols of national identity". He stressed that identification with one's nation is a major dynamic in nation building. It was "the process whereby the inhabitants of a state's territory come to be loyal citizens of that state" (Bloom, 1990, p.55).

In line with Bloom, Mommsen (1993) argued that there would be no durability of any political system if people living in the system lacked a specific national identity.

Commenting on the 'modernist' and 'post-modernist' views on nationalism, Smith (1995, p.55) pointed out the undeniable fact that "modern nations are legitimated through a universally applicable ideology, nationalism." Following Snyder's (1976, p.136) observation on what he called 'new nationalism' as "the same basic psychological drive, seeking security in the system of homelands, fatherlands and motherlands", Oommen (1997, p. 187) concluded that the emotional attachment to one's nation "is not free-floating and homeless, but firmly anchored to an attachment to a homeland". There must be a territory that can be genuinely felt by the people at large.

The national community is also considered to be “the ultimate domestic context” in promoting civic learning in Hong Kong. The *Guidelines* (CDC, 1996) stressed the importance of one’s national identity in defining one’s civic identity and stated that “nationalism and patriotism is essential not only for one’s national identity and sense of belonging, but also for the cohesion and strength of one’s own nation” (p.23). To prepare “participative” and “contributive” citizens for a more prosperous and stable Hong Kong society and to achieve a smooth transition from a colony to a special region in China, the *Guidelines* urged the adoption of a new national identity among our young citizens.

In view of the destruction caused by nationalism in the last century, some suggest that nationalism should be “tamed” by promoting democratic citizenship along with the development of the national sentiments. Habermas (1995, p.258) stressed that the meaning of the term nation should assume “a constitutive role in defining the political identity of the citizen within a democratic polity”. In this way, “This nationalism was able to foster people’s identification with a role which demanded a high degree of personal commitment”. He asserted that “Only democratic citizenship can prepare the way for a condition of world citizenship which does not close itself off within particularistic biases, and which accepts a worldwide form of political communication” (p.279).

The Development of National Identity

Habermas (1979) described the general dynamics whereby the mass of individuals make an identification with the state as the "*identity-securing interpretive system*". He was concerned with the symbolic mediation between the individual or the group and the social structure. He theorized that as long as the people know how to relate themselves with the environment through their own interpretive system, they have identity. Building on Habermas's idea, Bloom (1990) stressed the importance of providing individuals with actual experience, direct or indirect, with the state or some symbolic form of it. To help its members identify with the state, these contacts should actually benefit the individuals, in terms of psychological security. In this way, the symbols of the state will be easily internalised by individuals. It is simply ineffective to evoke an identification with the state by just introducing the idea of a nation, or the fact that it actually exist.

Preston (1997) examined the development of identity, in particular the political-cultural identity from another perspective, "the classical tradition of European social theory" (p.3). According to Preston, identity in the contemporary world is characterized by its "social construction, instability and ambiguity" (p.32). It is learned via a series of complex social

processes. The “locale”, which is “the sphere of routine activity and interaction, richly suffused with meanings” (p.47) is the base for developing “network”, a sphere for interacting with people and places at a distance and spreading of identity. The sets of relationships developed through the interactions may extend over time. Some of them flourish. But some decay. The changing patterns of relationship will be brought together and deposited in “memory”. Preston concludes that “it is the mix of official ideologies and inherited local resources which provide the materials of the political-cultural identities of individuals and groups” (p.186).

Smith (2001) pointed out that cultural identities are subject to processes of change in the multicultural nations. In view of ethnic heterogeneity and cultural pluralism, he asserted that the sense of national identity is also undergoing “a process of ethno-symbolic reconstruction” in modern states. Existing values, symbols, memories, myths and traditions which compose the heritage of nations are constantly being reinterpreted, reselected and recodified. National identity has become “hybridized” and fragmented (Bhabha, 1990). As a result, Smith observed that “a more civic and territorial version of nationalism” has become the basis for the development of national identity in many Western states. But there are limits to the extent of national reinterpretation. Smith argued

that relying only on a civic and territorial nationalism is not sufficient for achieving political solidarity. A sense of collective belonging and commitment requires the cultivation of other cultural criteria of nationhood, such as “some myths of origin, historical memories and collective symbols”.

The Civic Mission of Schools

The importance of education as a vehicle for promoting social cohesion was recognized by Emile Durkheim in the early 20th Century. Durkheim (1925) summarized three desirable outcomes achieved by formal education. They are a sense of discipline, a feeling of attachment to the social groups of which one is a member, and justification for one's group membership and obedience to its rule. Gus John (1998) observed that there has always been serious debate about the role of schooling and education in promoting social cohesion in most western societies. But he argued that the view that education should be ideologically neutral should be abandoned. Towards the end of the 20th Century, Feinberg (1998) also observed that the official role of the public school in US was and still is to foster a common, public identity. To him, the development of national identity and the transmission of American values have always been the major concern of the

public schools. In view of the conflicting demands from pluralism and multiculturalism, Feinberg maintained that “the common school was and continues to be the instrument for providing the technical, conceptual, and cultural skills that enable individuals to think of themselves as belonging to the fictive, invisible community called the nation” (p.44).

Similarly, Carrington and Short (2000, p.183) also argued that in every society, “school curricula are necessarily imbued with assumptions, both tacit and explicit, about national identity”. However, they regret that, from the literature, little is known about how children develop a sense of national identity though it is vital to political socialization.

Jenness (1990), being dissatisfied with current approaches to citizenship education, advocated a political education that goes beyond a nation-state and government-oriented focus. Dynneson and Gross (1991) also expressed their dissatisfaction with social studies as a major vehicle for achieving the civic mission of schools. They proposed that the subject should incorporate a more globally-oriented programme of study. Braungart and Braungart (1994) reported that citizenship education in the US in the 1990s was widely criticized for being ineffective, dry and dull and failing to enhance students’ understanding of history and civics. But the findings of their study reveal that young Americans can develop positive identification with their country and its fundamental

ideals. In facing the challenges of the new millennium, Ichilov (1998, p.268) admitted that it is a formidable task to prepare the younger generation for the citizenship role in our rapidly changing and highly diverse societies and stressed that "Citizenship education limited to inculcation of traditional patriotism or conventional nationalist ideology is obviously insufficient in a highly dynamic, complex and interdependent world".

In UK, despite the fact that "laissez-faire liberalism continued to provide powerful arguments against the use of the state in education" (Green, 1997, p.20), Fogelman (1997, p.95) observed that "citizenship education does appear to be back on the agenda and being seriously discussed". The heated debate as summarized by McLaughlin (1992) on whether a "minimalist" or "maximalist" approach to citizenship education should be adopted highlights both the dissatisfactions as well as the worries of the general public on the role of schools in preparing citizens for society. In advocating a maximalist approach to citizenship education, the Advisory Group on Citizenship (QCA, 1998, p.10) quotes from *The Mosaic of Learning* by David Hargreaves: "active citizens are as political as they are moral; moral sensibility derives in part from political understanding; political apathy spawns moral apathy". However, Crick (2000) expressed his worry at adopting such an approach:

... politically, in a free country, unlike in an autocracy, a citizenship education must not be centrally directed in detail, only in broad but clear principles. Government creates it, but keeps it at arms length” (p.9)

However, Sutherland was conscious of the great problem teachers are facing in values education. He argued, “Unless the society in which they live and work gives some coherent account of what it considers important in human life then teachers have no real framework in which to operate (Sacks and Sutherland, 1996, p.48-49). In our rapidly changing post-modern society, it is hard to maintain a coherent account of what it values. The government may have to take a more active role in developing some kinds of consensus among teachers and educators in promoting citizenship education and in coordinating the implementation of this important area of learning in the school curriculum..

Green (1997) acknowledged that education has played a significant role in the process of state formation or “nation-building”. On the one hand, he questioned the ability of education in promoting social cohesion, democratic citizenship and national identity in the postmodern world. On the other hand, he pointed out that there is a strong emphasis

on moral and social education in the formal education in most East Asian states, aiming at state formation.

In China, moral education has been given top priority throughout the history of education.

The importance of moral education as an effective means of social control can be summarized in the following passage from the Analects of Confucius:

If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame.

If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good.

(Translated by Waley, 2000, p.13)

It is a commonly held belief in most Chinese societies under the influence of Confucian thought that it is through education that people can be led by virtue, develop the sense of shame and “become good”. In contemporary China, moral education continues to be seen as the backbone of education. However, the curriculum contains more political content and ideological elements aiming at training “the young generation to become successors

for the cause of proletarian revolution” (Wu, 1992, p.133). Ichilov (1998) also affirmed that the main focus of civic education in China is to promote a moral code of behaviour and loyalty to the state. The heavy emphasis on the ideological and political components of citizenship is clearly demonstrated in the *Rules of Conduct for Pupils* which were implemented by the Ministry of Education of China in 1981 (Tucker and Gilliom, 1984, p.314). The first rule reads as follows:

Love the motherland, the people and the Communist Party of China. Study hard and be a good student.

In addition, to ensure the development of pupils’ national consciousness and their loyalty to the state, two separate school subjects, namely *Ideology-Moral Education* and *Ideology-Political Education* are offered at the primary and secondary levels respectively. These two subjects, in collaboration with the other school subjects in the school curriculum help to foster pupils’ identification with the state and their loyalty to the communist party which is the ruling party of the PRC.

Hong Kong has been portrayed as a “depoliticized” society under the British rule. As a

colony, civic education was not emphasised in the school curriculum. It was a marginalized curriculum area until the emergence of the “1997” issue. In analysing the role of civic education in Hong Kong from 1945 to 1997, Morris (1997) identified three distinct periods in terms of its purpose and the nature of the curriculum materials. He showed clearly how education can be of use to the state in pursuing its own interest. According to his analysis, in the period between 1945 and 1965, the education authority maintained a tight control on the school curriculum so as “to counter any direct threats to the legitimacy of the colonial government” (Morris, 1997, p.109). In the second period which extended from 1965 to 1984, the school curriculum was largely determined by the market but sensitive curriculum materials which might be offensive to the PRC were largely avoided through different monitoring mechanisms in the process of curriculum development and textbook review. The final period which started from early 1980s and ended at 1997 was characterized by the close attention given to the market forces and the crisis of legitimacy, as a result of the transfer of sovereignty, in designing and implementing civic learning in schools. On the whole, Morris concluded that civic education played a minimal role in Hong Kong in state formation. The colonial government was very successful in depoliticizing the curriculum. Most attempts made by the education authority to promote civic education were “symbolic action(s)” (Cuban,

1992) serving as legitimating devices for the colonial government to continue her rule over the territory. Hence, Hong Kong people remained apolitical and the civic deficit looms large among the school children.

Following the perspective of the sociology of educational knowledge, Tsang (1998) also identified three phases of development of citizenship education in post-War Hong Kong. These phases of development coincide with the three periods of civic education as distinguished by Morris. His findings reveal that the role of citizenship education in Hong Kong has been changing from serving as a “life boat” which helped to enable the nationless citizens to sail in “the rough sea” of China in the 1950s to grounds for nurturing of active citizens who could participate effectively in the political process in society in 1990s. However, he observed that the Chinese government and her supporters in Hong Kong were not happy with the development. They “propagated nationalist and patriotic citizenship education” (Tsang, 1998, p.249). In the current curriculum reform, moral and civic education is identified as an essential learning experience which children are entitled to have and a key learning task to be accomplished by all school children (CDC, 2002). It is part of the effort of the government in reversing the existing unsatisfactory situation in state formation in HKSAR. Can the renewed emphasis help to

strengthen the civic education curriculum and the role of schools in achieving its civic mission as prescribed by the education authority? Lo and Man (1996) stated that “the nurturing of moral citizens, if that indeed becomes the mandate of the state, should be a Herculean task for the educators of Hong Kong” (p.xxiii). To what extent does their statement accurately reflect the situation in citizenship education in HKSAR primary schools? This is a common concern of most civic educators in the region.

Conclusion

Citizenship is a contested concept. The literature shows that there are great differences between the western and the Chinese conceptions of citizenship. The former places more emphasis on the rights of the individual whereas the latter more on the interest of the collective. The rapid changes in society and in the meaning of the nation in the contemporary world also result in a more diverse interpretation of the concept. These have implications for the civic mission and for the development and implementation of civic education in primary schools. The literature further reveals that although development of children’s sense of national identity has always been part of the civic mission of the schools, inadequate attention has been given to the study of the

effectiveness of school education in promoting social cohesion and political integration.

Based on the western views, the development of a sense of national identity requires both teachers and pupils to participate in the “continuous reproduction and reinterpretation” of their distinctive national heritage (Smith, 2001). In the pre-1997 Hong Kong, it was found that the schools played a minimal role in state formation. Civic education was depoliticized but there was pressure for change after the reunification of Hong Kong with the PRC. The next chapter discusses the literature on the different curriculum and pedagogical approaches to citizenship education and their implications for Hong Kong primary schools. Particular reference will be made to the practices adopted in the primary schools in the United Kingdom, the United States and the People’s Republic of China to highlight essential features and major constraints in developing and implementing citizenship education in both the Western and Chinese society.

Chapter III

Literature Review II

Approaches to Citizenship Education

Following the examination of the different conceptions of citizenship and civic education, and their relationship with the development of national identity, this chapter reviews the common curriculum and pedagogical approaches to citizenship education in schools and their implementation in selected countries and regions. These include the United Kingdom (UK), the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States (US) and the HKSAR. The first two countries are closely related to Hong Kong. The former is the former sovereign state of the region and the latter the present one. They represent two different models, the Western and the Chinese model of citizenship education. The experience of the US is also reviewed because Hong Kong is under heavy influence of US culture, especially in citizenship education. A former primary school subject, Social Studies, which was integrated into the General Studies curriculum, was modelled on the curriculum proposed by the National Council for the Social Studies (1994) in the US. Review of the experience of these three countries and the HKSAR in the development and implementation of citizenship education provides a basis for investigating the

school-based civic education project in this action research.

The Citizenship Education Curriculum

With reference to the classical Greek concept, Morris (1997) summarized two basic orientations of civic education. One stresses commitment to the collective and the other emphasises participation in the public affairs. The former focuses on the working of the state and places greater emphasis on the understanding of the obligations of a “good” citizen whereas the latter stresses the examination of contemporary social issues and the promotion of social action for the betterment of society.

Lo and Man (1996) attempted to distinguish between civic education and citizenship education and affirmed that the former which aims at the making of “good” citizens is gradually being replaced by the latter which focuses on the understanding of rights and responsibilities of citizens and how they can be put into practice. However, Ichilov (1998) asserted that the two terms are often used interchangeably. As approaches to this important curriculum area, they are usually associated with the ideas of liberal democracy. Their main focus is on “individuals’ relations with the civic/social realm”. This study

follows Ichilov's view and considers the two terms to refer basically to similar curriculum and pedagogical approaches to preparation of young citizens.

Cogan et al (2002) argued that there are major differences between civics, civic education, values education, political education, and citizenship education. They are approaches representing different intellectual traditions and reflecting different philosophies, purposes and orientations in connection with civic learning. It is obvious that the choice of approaches has direct implications for the content and learning experiences provided to students. But Cogan and his associates were content to use the term "civic education" defined in its broadest sense to cover this curriculum area in schools. Consequently, they defined civic education "as the formation through the process of schooling of the knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions of citizens" (p.4). Following a Western tradition, they further elaborate on the content of the different areas of civic learning as follows:

Specifically this requires that students understand the institutions and systems involved in government, politics, and their political heritage, democratic processes, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, public administration, and judicial systems.

It includes a set of skills or processes related to this knowledge such as active citizenship, critical reflection, inquiry, and cooperation. And finally there is a set of values that underpins democratic processes, human rights, cohesion within diversity, tolerance, spirituality and religion, intercultural understanding, and ecological sustainability (Cogan, 2002, p.4).

In England, citizenship education at the primary level has been part of the non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education since the introduction of the National Curriculum (QCA, 2002a). *Curriculum Guidance 8* (NCC, 1990) describes citizenship education as one of the cross-curricula themes in the National Curriculum aiming at preparing students for adult life. "Eight elements" are emphasized in the process of preparation of citizens, namely community, plural society, citizen's rights and responsibilities, family, democracy, citizen and the law, work, leisure and employment, public services. The need for education for citizenship with a particular emphasis on the teaching of democracy was stressed in the Crick Report (QCA, 1998). Hence, a new National Curriculum area, citizenship education, was established. The focus of this curriculum area is the development of "active citizenship" through an education which emphasises "social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political

literacy” (QCA 1998b, p. 11-13). It includes the development of knowledge, skills, understanding and values. But at key stages 1 and 2 (ages 5-11), citizenship is still not taught as a subject. There is a joint non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship.

In the PRC, “the nurturing of moral citizens” has been the top priority in education. Civic education, if it exists, only constitutes part of moral education. In *Views on Further Strengthening Moral Education in the Secondary and Primary School* issued by The State Education Commission in 1990, it is stated clearly that “moral education includes ideological, political and ethical education. It serves to ensure the correctness in the political orientation in the development of talents and the full development of school children” (quoted in Gao, 1995, p.432). The curriculum document stresses that ideological and political education should be given due emphasis in implementing moral education. Moreover, there are three major focuses in school education. First, patriotic education should be given top priority in all curriculum areas and it should be integrated with other related areas of learning which include nationalistic education, socialism education and Learning to Love the Chinese Communist Party. Second, education for collectivism should be stressed. Third, development of children’s moral behaviours

should also be emphasized.

In addition to the whole curriculum approach, a subject called *Ideological and Moral Education* is specifically designed to take up the major responsibility in nurturing moral citizens in the primary schools. This subject was revised in 1990 and adopted a more realistic and systematic approach to enhancing children's moral and civic development. The "Five Stresses" and "Four Beauties"¹ were deleted. But the subject curriculum remained prescriptive and highly centralized. Patriotism was still the main theme of the subject. Through studying the subject, children are taught to love the state, the Communist Party, the nation, the collective and the labour; and to be civilized and polite, to be law-abiding, have perseverance and to be good. A set of guiding principles and teaching methods were also specified for teachers which emphasized the integration of Mao's and Marx's perspectives, students' own interests, the development of positive perceptions and images of people, society and the state, correct attitudes and rational thinking (Gao, 1995).

The rapid changes in society have had a great impact on education, especially on moral

¹ These were civic virtues to be developed by all Chinese citizens in 1980s which emphasized the subordination of personal interests to the collective interests.

and civic education in the PRC. With the adoption of the “socialist market economy” in the 1980s and the gradual opening up of the economy, the education authority attempted to incorporate the teaching of values associated with economic liberalization into the moral education curriculum which previously had emphasized mainly socialist values. It certainly created confusion in teachers who were caught between the demands to teach values which focused on stability and order and values which emphasized independent thinking, free expression of ideas and open discussion (Cummings, et al, 2001).

There is still heated debate on the relative supremacy of collective as contrasting with individualistic values in the global era (Cummings et al, 2001). Generally speaking, mainstream Western thinking about citizenship education has stressed the primacy of individual over collective values. The development of autonomous citizens is of utmost important in citizenship education. But most Asian societies think vice versa. Asian values are still characterized by a greater emphasis on the collective. However, with the rapid advancement of Asian societies in the last quarter of the twentieth century, the importance of collective in relation to individual values seems to have declined.

Cummings et al (2001) in their study of the Pacific Basin societies are impressed by the determination shown by these societies in fostering “autonomous personalities” aiming at

facilitating individual members to make intelligent and independent decisions. A similar “revisionist perspective” is also apparent in a growing emphasis on collective values in the West as a result of the enormous economic growth achieved by the Asian societies. The development of collective values, such as national pride and identity is back on the agenda of citizenship education in western countries.

In Hong Kong, the second *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools (Guidelines)* (CDC, 1996, p.i) claimed to adopt a learner’s perspective in developing civic education. It attempted to integrate “the learning of values, attitudes, beliefs and competence with the acquisition of knowledge in different dimensions of civic experience extending from the family to the world”. Two new elements were included in the curriculum framework, namely ‘Reflection’ and ‘Action’. They helped to add vigour to the civic learning of children. Through reflection and action, children are expected to internalize and apply what they have learnt in the civic lessons. The second *Guidelines* attempted to accommodate both the values of collectivism and individualism and stressed that individual and social core values need not be seen as mutually exclusive. They could be mutually supportive and inter-dependent. Thus, the *Guidelines* advised that “self realization is best achieved in common good” (CDC, 1996, p.15). Can it be achieved in

the primary curriculum?

In response to public demand, the development of students' national identity and their commitment to contribute to the nation and society is included as one of the seven learning goals in the basic education curriculum in the current educational reform (CDC, 2002a). *Moral and civic education* is considered the first of the five essential learning experiences for whole-person development and one of the four key tasks through which the learning goals and targets in the eight *Key Learning Areas* are to be achieved. Consequently, though civic education is still not an independent subject in the primary curriculum, a separate strand, National Identity and Chinese Culture has been created in the General Studies curriculum to help to promote children's national consciousness and identification with their mother country (CDC, 2002).

Curriculum Approaches to Civic Education

In their Asia-Pacific Region studies which include Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, and the United States, Cogan et al (2002) found that while most societies still rely on the whole school approach through which civic education is "taught through the

total process of schooling and, directly or indirectly, through most of the subjects in the curriculum”, this important area of learning is increasingly “taught as a subject in its own right” (p. 4). In the US, there are no national citizenship goals, curriculum or standards. Civic education is developed and implemented in a decentralized manner (Braungart and Braungart, 1998). However, Social Studies is generally recognized as the major vehicle for citizenship education in both the elementary and high school curriculum (Parker, 2001; Martorella, 1998; Banks, 1990). The *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* describes the subject as “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence” and states that “The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (National Council for the Social Studies, 1994, p.vii). In England, at key stages 1 and 2, Citizenship education is provided in a joint framework with Personal, Social and Health Education. According to the *National curriculum handbook for primary teachers* (QCA, 1999, p.247), it aims to ‘give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active, responsible citizens’. The framework sets out non-statutory guidelines covering four strands:

- developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities;

- preparing to play an active role as citizens;
- developing a healthy, safer lifestyle; and
- developing good relations and respecting the difference between people.

Basically, most primary schools continue adopting a cross-curricular and permeation approach in implementing this important area of learning in England. The findings of the Report on Monitoring on Citizenship and PSHE 2001-2002 were as follows, “A significant proportion of schools have engaged in whole school planning for citizenship – 65% at key stages 1 and 2, 67% at key stages 3 and 4” (QCA, 2002b, p,6). This is considered to be more realistic in an overcrowded curriculum (Fogelman, 1997) and could be “enriched and reinforced by being woven into wider work of the school in the community” (National Curriculum Council, 1990).

In Hong Kong, three modes of implementation of civic education in schools are recommended, namely the permeation approach, specific-subject approach and integrated-subject approach (CDC, 1996). But the permeation and cross-curricular approaches are the common approach adopted in most Hong Kong primary schools. According to Morris (1997, p.115), a “permeated” approach to civic education is an

approach to curriculum organization aiming to achieve its goals “through the inclusion in and across existing school subjects”. In the formal curriculum, General Studies, given its subject nature and curriculum structure, is perceived by teachers as an important vehicle for promoting civic learning. Lo and Man (1996), on the other hand, pointed out that civic education should go beyond the formal school curriculum or even school education.

The debate on whether a permeation or subject-specific approach should be adopted in promoting children’s understanding and identification with their mother country continues. The *Guidelines* (CDC, 1996) explains that the permeation approach has the advantage of promoting whole-school participation and concern for civic education. With the full participation and involvement of all the members of the school, students’ learning is more authentic and in turn, more effective. Students are able to engage in a great variety of civic learning activities which take place in rich and diverse learning contexts within the primary school curriculum. Through reflection and action, they can put into practice and internalize civic values, beliefs and competence. With no systematic and formal evaluations of the implementation of civic education in primary schools, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of this approach to civic education. However, Lee (1999) pointed out that with a “weak recommendation” for a whole-school approach,

civic learning remained scattered and fragmented throughout the curriculum. His study showed that secondary school principals and teachers were not satisfied with students' performance. Students were found to be inactive and not interested in civic education topics. They were not only weak in identifying with their national community. They were equally weak in their "international identity".

At the primary level, General Studies has the primary responsibility for citizenship education in the current curriculum reform. The results of a small survey (unpublished, 2000) on teachers' view on the implementation of the existing General Studies curriculum show that a substantial number of teachers were not satisfied with their teaching on topics related to China². They responded that they did not have good understanding of their mother country, in particular the political and legal system of the PRC. They were also not familiar with the teaching of values. Can General Studies help to achieve the civic mission of schools in fostering pupils' civic consciousness and a clear sense of national identity?

² A survey conducted in 2000 by the Special Interest Group of the Social Sciences Department in Hong Kong Institute of Education on the implementation of General Studies reveals that 35.4% of teachers disagreed that General Studies could foster good citizens for China and the HKSAR in the 21st century. And 44.5% of teachers disagreed that the subject could deepen pupils' understanding and appreciation of national tradition/heritage.

In England, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority also reported that PSHE lacked coherence (SCAA, 1996). It further revealed in its summary report that the subject suffered from low status because it was a non-statutory subject in the primary schools. The Report on Monitoring Citizenship and PSHE 2001-2002 (QCA, 2002b) also made the following observations:

....Provision for citizenship was being planned through a combination of discrete separately timetabled citizenship lessons, using opportunities in other subjects including PSHE, off time-table events and activities, and pupil participation in school and wider community activities. In most schools, at all key stages, teaching time allocated to citizenship each week is usually less than one hour. (p.6)

As a result, the subject was always in a disadvantageous position in competing with other subjects for resources and time for instruction. The three cases illustrated in the Guidance on *Designing and Timetabling the Primary Curriculum: a Practical Guide for Key Stage 1 and 2* (QCA, 2002c) showed that minimal time was allocated to PSHE and Citizenship³.

³ The instructional time (hours per year) allocated to PSHE and Citizenship in the three examples are 20 out of 840 in an inner-city primary school, 27 out of 855 in a suburban junior school, and 36 out of 795 in an infant school.

The School-based Approach to Civic Education

Having no centralized curriculum in the form of a subject syllabus and basically being a non-examination area of study, civic education in primary schools in Hong Kong is, to a large extent, a school-based curriculum. Skilbeck (1984, p.2) defined school-based curriculum development as “the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of a programme of students’ learning by the educational institution of which those students are members”. But Lewy (1991) argued that it could be defined both in a broad and a narrow sense. According to him,

“The broadest definition of SBCD implies not only full autonomy for the school to decide what to teach, but also a commitment on its behalf to prepare instructional materials for the courses offered, with a minimal reliance on available textbooks. The narrowest definition of SBCD would stipulate that the central educational authorities delegate some freedom to, or bestow some autonomy upon the local or the school authorities in determining a certain part of the school programme” (p.34).

Lewy (1991) also elaborated on the types of school-based curriculum development

activities conducted by teachers at the school level. They included selecting, adapting, and integrating curriculum and instructional materials based on existing curricula and creating new curriculum and learning units. Central to these school-based curriculum development activities was the common curriculum-related decision on selection.

According to Lewy, in order to participate in these activities, one has to be clear about the scope of selection, the level of selection, the alternatives available for selection, and one's right and ability to select among the curriculum and instructional materials.

In connection with the development of a school-based curriculum on civic education focusing on the fostering of national identity among students, the major selection decisions are related to the conception of citizenship, nation and state, national identity, citizenship education, curriculum and pedagogical approaches. These decisions are integral to the development of a quality school-based civic education curriculum. But to what extent are teachers allowed to select freely among the options? Moreover, do teachers have the ability to make the right choice? The forgoing analysis suggests that these are complex questions and it is likely that the answers are not positive at present in the HKSAR.

Lewy (1991) criticized the school-based approach as unrealistic in expecting teachers to be experts in curriculum development and to redefine their professional role not only as teachers, but as curriculum developers and researchers too. As a result, he argued that most school-initiated changes are usually limited in scope, short lived, and lacking a comprehensive evaluation of their effectiveness in promoting learning. Marsh et al (1990) agreed that teachers were not adequately prepared to take up a new role as curriculum developers. On the one hand, they were ill equipped with the necessary skills to participate in the curriculum development process. On the other hand, most of them still perceived themselves as defenders of the status quo or implementers of a curriculum developed by experts in their fields.

Despite the above-mentioned difficulties, Lewy (1991) and Marsh et al (1990) were convinced that there were grounds for pursuing school-based curriculum development. In sum, it helped to maintain teachers' autonomy in curriculum development, promote their self-actualization, motivation and sense of achievement, enhance the status of the teaching profession, establish a local-needs orientation and maintain close monitoring and effective control of the curriculum.

Elliott (1998) distinguished between standards-led and teacher-led curriculum development and concluded that both were equally unsatisfactory in preparing our future citizens to meet the challenge of social change. He proposed a “negotiated” national curriculum which encourages the development of a continuous dialogue through an interlocking network of local, regional and national forums. He also advocated a pedagogically driven approach to curriculum development. To adopt such an approach, the central agency is responsible for providing a curriculum framework which is innovative and empowering. It should be “open to being continuously developed – redefined and reshaped – by teachers, as they devise and test pedagogical strategies for realizing the aims and values which define the innovation” (p.160). To what extent is our civic education curriculum a “negotiated” national curriculum? How far can the development of a school-initiated civic education project empower teachers and help them develop effective curriculum and pedagogical approaches in promoting students’ sense of national identity? Through a thorough investigation of the development and implementation of a school-based civic education project, this study intends to throw light on the above questions.

Instructional Approaches to Civic Education

In line with the distinction made by Morris (1997), Dynneson and Gross (1990) classified the approaches to civic education into two categories based on their instructional orientations, namely civic learning and sociocivic learning. The former centres on the study of history and the political system whereas the latter “attempts to go beyond the formalisms of political knowledge to include the transactions of everyday life” (Dynneson and Gross, 1990, p.25). Based on the above orientations, they further identified twelve approaches commonly used in schools. These approaches fall into two main groups, the core and the subordinate citizenship education approaches. The core group includes the discipline approach; the jurisprudence approach; the critical thinking approach; and the citizenship as civic participation or civic action approach. The rest belong to the subordinate group. They are the social problems of public issues approach; the value clarification approach; the moral development approach; the institutional school reform approach; the citizenship as persuasion, socialization and indoctrination approach; the citizenship as contemporary issues and current events approach; the citizenship as humanistic development approach; and the citizenship as preparation for global interdependence approach. These represent a spectrum of approaches which aim to

achieve citizenship education with a variety of aims and purposes. But Newmann (1975) was concerned that most of these approaches were not conducive to the promotion of civic participation.

Participation has been a concept central to citizenship education. Stradling (1987) elaborated that citizenship education is about participation and for participation. To facilitate participation, learning should be based on action and experience. Hence, there should be greater emphasis on group work, collaborative learning, community resources and community-based learning (Fogelman, 1997). Schools should also examine whether their ethos, organization and daily practices are consistent with the goals and objectives of the citizenship education that they are pursuing.

With a long history of development, social studies educators in the US have built up a large stock of refined and elaborated teaching strategies for implementing the curriculum. Due emphasis is given to the teaching of knowledge, skills and values. The inquiry approach emphasizes enhancing students' understanding of society and their skill development. In the value domain, which constitutes an integral part of the citizen preparation, a variety of approaches to values inquiry are proposed. They include

inculcation, clarification, analysis, moral development and action learning. These approaches aim to develop students valuing efficacy as independent and autonomous citizens and to increase their proficiency in decision-making and citizen action (Banks, 1990).

Three elements, namely Social and Moral Responsibility, Community Involvement and Political Literacy are recommended by the Advisory Group on Citizenship in England (QCA, 1998, p. 13). Given the nature of these strands of study, the Advisory Group suggests the use of controversial issues for developing students' civic understanding, values and competence. In general, investigation of these issues can facilitate a high level of participation. But to avoid bias in the teaching of controversial issues, three general approaches are put forward. They are *the "Neutral Chairman" approach*, *the "Balanced" approach*, and *the "Stated Commitment" approach*. Findings show that there is no clear indication on whether one approach is more effective than the others. Hence Harwood (1998) advises that teachers should not rely on one approach and should try to solicit students' opinions in making the best instructional decisions. On the whole, a more interactive teaching approach should be adopted to enhance active participation (Reynolds, 1994).

Woyach (1991) argued that civic participation in itself does not lead to the development of healthy citizenship. The crucial factor lies in the search for the “public good”. Hence, he proposed that “Educators should reinforce and nurture students’ interest in the public good and their commitment to searching for it. ...They should have opportunities to encounter role models who have made the public interest an important part of their lives.” (p.62). Brandhorst (1990, p.164) adopted a social psychological perspective in examining citizenship education. According to him, there is a close linkage between empathy and moral consideration for others in society. His analysis helps to explain why some members are becoming alienated from the community. Rapaport’s (1988) findings also affirmed that the perception of collective good and altruism could lead to a decision to contribute towards the public good. Moreover, there is a reciprocal relationship between civic behaviour and individuals’ “schemata” and “frames”. Civic education teachers should try their best to enhance children’s ideological sophistication through the development of their “ideological schemata”. Brandhorst further pointed out that informal group settings are more conducive for development of participation skills. The concrete, highly personalized, face-to-face contact is most effective in equipping students with the understanding and competence for reflective citizen action.

Giroux (1983) identified three major approaches to citizenship education adopted in most Western societies. They are the transmission approach, reflective inquiry approach, and critical approach. Lo and Man (1996) observed that despite the increasing popularity of the reflective-inquiry approach, especially in developed societies, the transmission approach remains the most common approach adopted by schools today. As for the critical approach, they had doubts about its practicability in the actual classroom and its effectiveness in promoting reflective citizens. There seemed to be a lack of empirical evidence that the approach had been widely accepted by teachers and had achieved its goal of emancipating citizens from the constraints imposed by society.

Arthur, Davison and Stow (2000, p.30-31) argued in favour of developing pupils' "social literacy" in order to promote critical citizenship. They drew on Gee's (1987) notion of "Discourse" and Bentley's (1998) model of "Stages of Development" in pupils' citizenship development which "begins with the self and radiates outwards through personal relationships to communities and ultimately to society". The development of "social literacy" would involve learning a repertoire of social and linguistic skills and social knowledge which would help pupils to understand a range of social issues. But most important of all, they recommended that "the values and beliefs embedded in

communities, in facets of society, in the very aspects of citizenship about which pupils are being informed, need to be made visible, need to be reflected on and debated.” (p.37)

They realized that it would not be easy for civic education teachers to conduct and engage in the “Discourse” suggested by Gee and Bentley.

With a different orientation towards citizenship education in China, the major teaching strategies employed by teachers also differ from the Western societies. Wu (1992, p.13) attempted to identify the main approaches to moral education in China. They include: “self-cultivation, development of moral consciousness and feelings, reward and punishment of moral behaviors, usage of public opinion, reasoning and persuasion, modeling, moral practice, and hidden curriculum”. But he pointed out that human modeling is among the most extensively used method in China, especially in Socialist China. Indeed, there is a long tradition in using role models to teach children moral values and behaviours in the Chinese society. These role models include national heroes, honest officials, filial sons, faithful friends, great writers, political leaders etc. With the founding of the PRC, human modeling became the core approach to moral education. For example, the use of the modeling method is clearly specified in the *Ten Regulations of Strengthening the Construction of Spiritual Civilization in the Elementary and Secondary*

Schools in Beijing (Chinese Education News, 1987).

The hierarchical social structure in the Chinese societies provides favourable contexts for adopting the human modeling approach to moral education. According to Confucianism, every member in society has specific roles to play and certain responsibilities to fulfill. In such paternalistic societies, people are expected to follow the authority. Wu (1992) also argued that under the communist rule, China has become a highly centralized society. The Communist Party, being the only ruling political party, dominates society with a single set of moral and political values which stresses love and loyalty to the Party and the collective. Thus, there is a high degree of consistency in the value system among different groups in society. This certainly helps to support and reinforce the values acquired by pupils in schools and is conducive to the symbolic mediation between the individual or the group and the social structure (Habermas, 1979). In such a way, the “locale”, which is identified by Preston (1997) as the base for development of cultural and political identity, is also rich in meaning. If students could be provided with actual experience, direct or indirect, of the state or some symbolic form of it in their classroom activities, it would develop their identification with their state (Bloom, 1990). With a complete control of the means of propaganda, the Communist Party has, in fact,

demonstrated to us how the modeling approach can be used to promote patriotism and national sentiments through numerous nationwide campaigns of modeling on national heroes such as Lei Feng (Reed, 1996), Lai Ning and Liu Hu-lan.

In the elementary classrooms, as described by Wu (1992), good deeds and desired moral behaviours are presented through stories of role models. After reading or listening to stories of positive examples, pupils are given questions for discussion. The questions aim to focus pupils' attention on the values and behaviours they would adopt. Sometimes, questions on dilemmatic situations are included to help pupils make moral judgments and decisions. But the usual finale of the modeling activities is the reading and recitation of the sayings of the role models presented in the stories. Pupils are reminded to take these sayings as codes of conduct in their daily living. Thus the approach remains didactic and teacher-centred. Pupils usually play a more passive role in following teachers' instruction in class.

Given the marginal status of civic education in the curriculum and the depoliticized culture of Hong Kong, the teaching of this important curriculum area has received little attention from both the education authority and the public in the past. Morris (1997, p.123)

commented that “civic education plays a minimal role in schools”. There is a lack of systematic and formal evaluation on the implementation of civic education at the primary level. To review its effectiveness in preparing young citizens in the HKSAR, we can only make reference to studies on this curriculum area at the junior secondary level. Lee’s study (1999) revealed that teachers and principals were not satisfied with the civic education curriculum because it neglected nationalistic education. It is also reported that classroom discussion focused more on cultural identity rather than political identity and teachers tended to encourage a more critical approach in examining role models. There is evidence showing that many schools attempted to promote civic learning through assemblies (CDI, 1995). But the most common activity conducted in the assemblies was a short talk given by teachers or guest speakers. Pupils could hardly participate in these talks. Delivered in a detached manner, these talks could not provide pupils with actual experience with the state or the symbols representing the state; it was difficult to foster their national consciousness.

Some exemplars of school-based curriculum initiatives at the primary level provided in the website of the Education and Manpower Bureau (2002) also displayed similar characteristics. For instance, a study of the neighbouring community designed by teachers

of a primary school in the inner city area was mainly implemented through assemblies and class teacher lessons. Similar to Morris's and Chan's observation (1997, p.255), there was tendency to focus on the study of "abstract, non-controversial and established knowledge" in these assemblies and class teacher sessions. There was not an equal emphasis on the development of skills and attitudes in the programme. Another example provided in the website was developed by teachers in a primary school located in a public housing estate. It was characterized by its emphasis on the development of traditional Chinese values. The two units of civic learning focus on filial piety and politeness. Through the study and discussion of stories of real life events, pupils were guided to identify and analyse the main themes presented in the stories and adopt the desired values and behaviours as their own code of practice. The learning process as described in the scheme of work indicated that there was more interaction between teachers and pupils but the main purpose of the learning activities was again the inculcation of the desired values among pupils. The narrow focus of civic education on personal development also explains why Lee (1999) found that adolescents in Hong Kong are not only weak in national identity but equally weak in "international identity". It seemed that "the depoliticized and descriptive approaches to civic education" (Morris, 1997, p.124) are reinforced rather than discarded.

A report from the Curriculum Development Institute (1995) revealed that civic education programmes in schools focused on the teaching of “civic knowledge” only. On the whole, they failed to have an impact on pupils’ learning (Morris, 1997). Lo and Man (1996) expressed their worry on the future development of civic education in Hong Kong. They pointed out that there was a lack of consensus on citizenship and coherence in civic education in the process of reunification with the PRC. On the one hand, that was the result of the enormous and multi-dimensional changes emerging in the process. Hong Kong people were becoming more divided and uncertain in looking at themselves, their local community and their nation. On the other hand, it resulted from the incompatibility between a participatory culture as a major goal of civic education and the development of political institutions which limit civic participation in the post-1997 years. In fact, Morris (1997) found that China had exerted an even stronger influence on civic education in Hong Kong. The fear of a reversion to the “subject political culture” (Lau, 1982) is common among civic educators. Of course, the great differences between the two systems in their ideology, social norms, political culture, standard of living, conception of rights and responsibilities and so on pose further problems in developing students’ understanding and positive perceptions of the national community. How can schools appropriately respond to such great changes and help to satisfy society’s demand for

developing children as patriotic nationals on the one hand, and autonomous citizens who can think independently and critically and participate intelligently in both the local and national community? This is a major problem for civic educators and teachers in the HKSAR.

Conclusion

This chapter reviews the literature on citizenship education. The focused study on the development and implementation of this curriculum area in the US, the UK and the PRC as well as in the HKSAR showed that there are great variations in their aims, their content and the curriculum and pedagogical approaches to citizenship education in these countries and regions. They also differ in the names given to this domain of learning in the primary curriculum. The civic education curriculum of the HKSAR has been under the influence of these countries because of her proximity to them spatially, culturally, historically, politically or ideologically. The inclusion of ideas and practices from these countries has enriched her civic education programmes on the one hand, but on the other hand, it has also created problems and difficulties for teachers in promoting civic learning in schools. The following chapters provide a detailed account of a research study on a

school-based civic education curriculum initiative in a primary school in the local community. It aims to throw light on the above question and explore major issues and constraints in the development and implementation of civic education in the HKSAR primary schools.

Chapter IV

Questions Arising from the Literature Review

The literature review presented in the last two chapters shows that citizenship and civic education are contesting concepts. It poses great problems to civic educators and teachers in developing and implementing this important area of learning in schools. This chapter identifies four major groups of questions arising from the literature review and discusses them in the light of promoting children's sense of national identity in the HKSAR primary schools.

Questions Arising from the Different Conceptions of Citizenship Education

Teachers are faced with conflicting expectations and demands in developing citizenship education in the HKSAR. Being a predominantly Chinese society, Hong Kong retains most of her Chinese traditions. Confucianism, as a philosophy and ideology, still dominates the political culture and most human relationships in Hong Kong. But she was also greatly influenced by the Western culture during her long period of colonial rule by the British. The adoption of the British social, economic, educational, legal and political

institutions and systems in this period has had long lasting impact on this Chinese society and her culture. Hence, there exist not only competing conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education in Hong Kong, which is common to other societies and states, but also extremely diverse views on the state, the nation and society as well as on education. Consequently, teachers and educators have great difficulties in arriving at a consensus in developing the civic education curriculum (Lo and Man, 1996).

In fact, the literature shows that most teachers in the HKSAR have very vague ideas of what citizenship is. They lack a coherent framework for developing their own school-based civic education curriculum. As a result, teachers have tended to adopt “the depoliticized and descriptive approaches to civic education” (Morris, 1997, p.124). The second *Guidelines* (CDC, 1996) proposes to reconcile the values of collectivism and individualism and states that “self realization is best achieved in common good” (CDC, 1996, p.15). Can teachers follow such a direction and achieve the goal as prescribed by the *Guidelines*?

Questions Arising from the Perception of the Civic Mission of Schools in the Global Era

In the current curriculum reform, great emphasis is placed on moral and civic education. To promote moral and civic education in the primary curriculum, the General Studies curriculum has been redesigned and a new strand of study, National Identity and the Chinese Culture has been added to the subject curriculum. Can the renewed emphasis on civic education help to strengthen the civic mission of schools? To what extent can primary schools accomplish their civic mission as prescribed by the education authority?

There is another major issue that civic teachers and educators have to resolve in promoting civic education in the HKSAR. As pointed out by Ichilov (1998), “the affinity and identity dimensions of citizenship” have attracted greater attention in the rapidly changing and increasingly globalized post-modern world. In the HKSAR, the urgent need for nation building in a post-colonial period has further increased the importance of the identity dimension of citizenship. Fostering children’s national consciousness and identity has become a major concern of the education authority and the local schools. To what extent should primary schools be responsible for nation building? How should schools

reconcile the development of patriotic citizens and democratic citizens? How can schools prepare our young generation to be both patriotic nationals who are loyal to the state and global citizens who can cope with this highly dynamic, complex and interdependent world? These are questions to which teachers cannot provide commonly agreed answers. The development of national identity in schools remains a controversial issue in the Special Administrative Region.

Questions Arising from the Different Curriculum Approaches to Civic Education

The permeation approach was widely accepted, but perhaps uncritically, by teachers as legitimate and consistent with the requirements of the education system and the political context of the local community before 1997. In fact, most primary school principals and teachers still claim that they have been promoting civic learning through various subjects in the formal curriculum. Thus civic education in primary schools is basically a school-based curriculum. But Lee (1999) points out that a “weak recommendation” of the “whole-school approach” has proved to be ineffective in promoting civic learning. In the recent curriculum reform, a new strand of study, “The Chinese culture and the national identity” is added to the framework of the new General Studies curriculum. Can the new

General Studies take up this responsibility and help to prepare “good” citizens in the HKSAR?

There has been practically no systematic evaluation of the implementation of civic education, or of *General Studies* in primary schools in the past. We do not know exactly how the permeation approach is carried out in the local primary school context and to what extent it is effective in enhancing civic learning. Without a centralized curriculum, can teachers work out their own school-based curriculum which can meet the needs of society? Do they have the necessary understanding and competence to take part in the “curriculum decision-making” (Marsh et al, 1990) in this important but long neglected area of learning?

Questions Arising from the Diverse Instructional Approaches to the Preparation of Committed Citizens in the HKSAR

Following Lawrence Stenhouse’s (1983) view, Elliott (1998) argues that all curriculum changes are in fact, “social experiments” in which teachers have a central role to play. But the literature review presented in the preceding chapters cannot provide clear

evidence that teachers, especially General Studies teachers, are well prepared to take part in the experiments. Basically, they lack the training and the experience in teaching civic education, which was and still is an underdeveloped curriculum area in the primary schools. As teachers, they are also not used to the development of school-based curricula and values teaching because it is rarely carried out in the primary school context. Given the major responsibility for strengthening the teaching of civic education in the primary school curriculum, and a high expectation for promoting “learning to learn” through the various subjects in the formal curriculum in the era of change, General Studies teachers are facing tremendous pressure and a great challenge. How do they respond to these demands? What pedagogical approaches are at the teachers’ disposal for preparing citizens with a clear sense of national identity but who at the same time are active and reflective in participating in community affairs? Can they be easily adopted in the local context? Are they effective in achieving the goals of civic education guidelines and meeting the aspirations of society? These are fundamental questions which should be given special attention if this “key task” in the basic education curriculum is to be further developed in the primary school curriculum.

The UK and US experience in developing citizenship education suggest that although a

great variety of approaches have been adopted in schools, they have not been conducive to the promotion of civic participation which is central to citizenship education in most Western democratic societies. Following examples from the West, the second *Guidelines* also stressed promoting reflection and action. Can a school-based approach to civic education help to promote such learning in the primary schools? What strategies should be used to promote such learning? Should the role modeling approach, which is widely used in the Mainland, be used in the local context? On the other hand, according to Smith (2001), Habermas (1995) and Bloom (1990), the provision of actual experience with the state or some symbolic form of it is essential to the development of children's national identity. Are teachers sensitive to the changing beliefs and conceptions of national identity? Are they able to engage in the "reselection, reinterpretation and recodification" (Smith, 2001, p.18) of the basic cultural elements which constitute the collectivity? Can they identify these elements which include memories, values, symbols, myths and traditions? It is important that teachers and educators should be well aware of these questions and be equipped with the basic understanding and competencies in tackling them.

The four groups of questions identified from the literature review highlighted the

complexity and difficulty in developing civic education in the primary schools of the HKSAR. First, teachers were under the influence of conflicting views and conceptions on citizenship and civic education. There were also contrasting demands from society for the preparation of citizens for the Chinese nation. Following from the first group of questions, there was the concern for the civic mission of the school. Civic educators and teachers in the HKSAR were faced with issues related to nation building in our increasingly globalised world, such as the development of patriotic or democratic citizens, the fostering of pupils' ethnic or civic identity, and the promotion of nationalism or multiple citizenships. The complicated tasks civic education teachers had to shoulder gave rise to questions related to the curriculum and pedagogical approaches to this curriculum area. The experience in the UK, the US and the PRC in developing and implementing civic education showed that there was a great variety of approaches to this domain of learning. However, because of its marginal status in the primary curriculum, there had not been any systematic study of the development and implementation of civic education, especially at the primary level. With renewed emphasis on civic education focusing on the fostering of children's national identity in the HKSAR, there is an urgent need for a thorough investigation into this area of learning.

The Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how civic education implemented through a primary school subject, General Studies, could contribute to the development of children's sense of national identity in the HKSAR. Through action research into a school-based General Studies unit developed and implemented in a local primary school, this case study attempted to provide answers to the questions arising from the above areas of concern. It intended to further our understanding of teachers' perception of citizenship and civic education and the civic mission of local primary schools. This study also attempted to make sense of the common curriculum and pedagogical approaches adopted by primary school teachers in promoting civic learning. Based on a participative mode of inquiry, the study identified and cast light on major issues, problems and constraints in developing and implementing civic education at the primary level in the HKSAR. The "practical knowledge" (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) generated from the study could further help to improve teachers' practice in this important curriculum area.

As reported in Chapter I, the development of the school-based thematic unit under study was part of a large-scale civic education enhancement project initiated by the CCE of the

HKIEd. Action research into the development of this General Studies unit helped to inform the participant teachers about their practice in the project. Based on the continuous feedback and the rich information gathered from the study, they could evaluate and improve the design and approaches of the thematic unit in collaboration with the researcher. Through participation in the study, participant teachers also acquired hands-on experience in promoting civic education via the General Studies curriculum and in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school-based General Studies unit. As school-based curriculum development and action research was strongly recommended by the Curriculum Development Council as a strategy for supporting the implementation of the numerous curriculum reform initiatives in the new wave of educational change at the turn of the century, the findings from this study helped to further our understanding of the use of the curriculum and research approach for enhancing teaching and learning in the different curriculum areas in the basic education in HKSAR.

Research questions

The research question guiding this study originated from the practical needs of school

teachers in developing and implementing civic education in the local primary schools as well as from the literature on civic education. Teachers in general recognized that there was an urgent need for nation building in the local community and schools were expected to play a more vital role in fulfilling their civic mission. But the literature revealed that there were competing conceptions of citizenship education. As a result, there were very diverse views on the orientation of civic education, the civic mission of primary schools and the approaches to be adopted in developing and implementing the civic education curriculum. The frame for the initial driving question, how civic education in schools helped to develop children's sense of national identity, served to generate and refine emerging themes and aimed to develop an "experiential understanding" (Stake, 2000) of the civic education project under study. With a full and thorough knowledge of the particular, which was provided by the study of this school-based project, major strategies, problems, issues and constraints related to the promotion of children's sense of national identity through General Studies could be identified and examined. The study could also develop tacit knowledge for teachers to tackle these problems, issues and constraints in the local context. Initially, four emerging themes were identified and they provided the basis for more specific questions for this action research study.

1. How do the different conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education influence teachers in the development of their school-based civic education project?
2. How do teachers perceive the civic mission of schools and what effects does it have on their role as civic educators in fostering students' sense of national identity and the curriculum and instructional design of the study unit?
3. How does the permeation approach recommended by the education authority affect the development and implementation of the civic education curriculum in the pilot school?
4. How does the implementation of a school-based General Studies unit affect children's civic learning, especially in the development of their sense of national identity?

These questions were designed to guide data collection so that a set of propositions regarding the major research question could be developed as theoretical findings.

However, new questions might emerge as the study got underway and an existing question became inappropriate. Following the progression of the development of the school-based General Studies unit, paying attention to the "presage"⁴, "context",

⁴ "Presage" refers to the intention of the development of any study unit. It was first proposed by Gage's (1978) in his "presage-context-process-product continuum" for the study of curricular and instructional design.

“process” and “product” (Alexander, 2000, p. 270), this study aimed to provide a full account of the development and implementation of the study unit. It also attempted to identify “causal processes” (Gomm, Hammersley & Foster, 2000) and develop “naturalistic generalizations” (Stake, 2000) in relation to the development of the school-based civic education curriculum and the promotion of children’s identification with the state through General Studies, a primary school subject. Accomplishments and limitations of the school-based civic education project were highlighted and analysed in the light of these causal processes. The study further summarized major issues, problems and constraints in the development and implementation of the project and discussed possible ways of tackling them.

To start with, the study generated specific questions related to the four broader groups of questions arising from the literature. They provided clear guidance for investigation into the “presage”, the “context”, the “process” and the “product” of this school-based curriculum development project. The specific questions are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: List of Research Questions

| Theme | Specific questions |
|---|---|
| <p>Theme 1:</p> <p>The influence of the Chinese and the western conceptions of citizenship and civic education in the development of the school-based civic education project</p> | <p>What conception(s) of citizenship and civic education, if any, do teachers adopt in designing this school-based civic education project? Do they have a special preference for the Chinese or the Western conceptions in construing the relationship between the individual and the state? How do teachers' conceptions of citizenship and civic education influence the initiation, planning and development of the project? What effects does it have on the design and content of the civic education study unit?</p> |
| <p>Theme 2:</p> <p>The civic mission of the school and the role of teachers</p> | <p>How do teachers perceive the civic mission of the school? How do they see themselves as teachers who are given the responsibility for the development of children's sense of national identity? How are their perceptions of the civic mission of the school related to their conception(s) of citizenship and civic education? How do their perceptions of</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>the civic mission of the school affect the design, the selection of content and the teaching approaches of the study unit?</p> |
| <p>Theme 3:</p> <p>The curriculum approaches to civic education and their effects on pupils' civic learning in the primary school</p> | <p>What curriculum approaches do teachers employ in designing and developing the school-based civic education project? What is the rationale for adopting such approaches?</p> <p>What are the pros and cons in adopting such curriculum approaches in the local primary school context? To what extent can they extend and expand the curriculum space and provide a better, richer and more flexible curriculum for pupils to learn and help to attain the objectives of the study unit? In what ways do they constraint the development and implementation of the project? How do pupils respond to the content of the different topics?</p> |
| <p>Theme 4:</p> <p>The pedagogical approaches to civic education and their effects on the</p> | <p>What are the instructional approaches adopted by teachers in teaching the various topics in the study unit? Why do teachers select these approaches? What learning activities are designed and conducted in the General Studies classes by teachers?</p> <p>What are the outstanding features of these learning activities?</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| learning process and outcomes in the primary schools | How are these activities implemented? What learning outcomes can they achieve? To what extent can these activities help to achieve the objectives of the lessons? To what extent can they promote an active and interactive learning environment for pupils? How do pupils feel about these activities? How do they participate in these activities? What are the major problems in implementing these learning activities in the General Studies classroom? |
|--|---|

These research questions also provide a framework for analysing the data generated from multiple sources. Chapter VI focuses on examining and reporting the results of the study related to the questions of Themes 1 and 2 and part of the questions of Theme 3. Analysis of the results relevant to questions of Themes 3 and 4 is to be given in Chapters VII and VIII.

The Importance of the Study

In the post-colonial period, civic education teachers in the HKSAR primary schools are

facing conflicting demands and expectations from the local, national and global communities. With minimal support from the education authority, they are in need of advice and guidance in developing their own school-based civic education programmes. This action research project provides teachers with “living knowledge” (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) which aims to enhance their understanding of the development and implementation of similar programmes in their own school. Rich description of the experience of the teachers in a “social experiment” (Elliot, 1998) can demonstrate to teachers clearly how curriculum innovations in this area of learning can be effected. This exploratory study further examines critically the appropriateness and relevance of the curriculum and pedagogical approaches adopted by the school teachers in promoting civic education. The “naturalistic generalizations” help teachers, educators and curriculum developers identify the strengths and weaknesses of the existing practices in schools. The “experiential knowledge” (Lincoln, 2001) acquired through this study can also generate guidelines and provide exemplars for teachers’ reference in developing similar programmes and thus contribute to the continuing development of civic education in the primary curriculum.

The investigation of the problems, including major constraints and issues in the

development of this project aims to be useful to educators, curriculum developers and civic education teachers. Valuable lessons should be learned through the study, which should help to inform teachers, educators and curriculum developers on what and how things should be done and what should be avoided in the provision of this essential learning experience in primary schools. They also have implications for the preparation of civic education teachers in the HKSAR.

Chapter V

Methodology

This study employed a participatory form of inquiry and adopted an action research design to investigate the school-based civic education project. The research methodology aimed to be appropriate to the study because it helped to address the research questions identified in the previous chapter and develop “practical knowledge” for understanding and further developing civic education in primary schools in HKSAR.

Greenwood and Levin (2000, p.96) provide a clear purpose for action research: “Action research aims to solve pertinent problems in given contexts through democratic inquiry in which professional researchers collaborate with local stakeholders to seek and enact solutions to problems of major importance to the stakeholders”. Reason and Bradbury (2001) also argue that action research is a different form of research practice which leads to “better” research. It differs from traditional academic research in its purposes, the relationship between knower and known, the way knowledge is conceived and related to practice. Action research, according to Reason and Bradbury, is an emergent and developmental form of inquiry. It starts with practical problems and issues and aims at

developing living knowledge which can inform and improve practice. As a research methodology, it is “rooted in everyday experience” and involves an evolutionary and developmental process. Moreover, action research is not only about working towards practical outcomes, it is also about creating new forms of understanding. The development of these understandings is based on the perspectives and interests of those who have an immediate concern for the problems and/or issues under study. Thus it is not only a methodology, it is a paradigm grounded in “a participatory worldview” which “join(s) knower with known in a participative relationship” (p.4). Action research is in essence participative research. It is concerned with the pursuit of meaning and purpose and with making a contribution to the well being of people and communities.

Research studies grounded in a participatory view can have an advantage of drawing on and integrating both the positivist and constructivist perspectives in investigating problems arising from people’s daily experience. Following a participatory mode of inquiry, with the notion of “reality as subjective-objective” (Reason and Bradbury, 2001, p.9), inquirers can be both “situated and reflexive” and “see inquiry as a process of coming to know” (p.7). It is a process which involves a multiplicity of ways of knowing. It is “an extended epistemology” through which knowing starts from a relation between

knower and known and develops through participation and intuition (Lincoln, 2001; Reason, 1994; Habermas, 1972). It encourages a continuous inquiry into the meaning and purpose of our practice.

An action research methodology is a sound approach for investigating and improving educational practices. It provides both the theoretical and the methodology framework for investigating the school-based civic education project. In this study, as reported in Chapter 1, both the participant teachers of the pilot school and the researcher, who was the adviser to the school-based project, were faced with a practical problem of developing children's sense of national identity via the General Studies curriculum. This was a genuine problem arising from their practice. An action research methodology could help the participants identify emerging problems and issues in the process of developing and implementing the school-based General Studies unit and provide a framework for investigating them. The participatory mode of inquiry could facilitate diverse forms of knowing and help to generate practical knowledge that could inform their practice in the area of their immediate concern, which was the development of students' sense of national identity through the teaching of a subject, General Studies, in the formal curriculum. This could lead to the continuous improvement of their practice in this

important curriculum area, which was the ultimate goal of those teachers and the researcher who joined this Quality Education Fund project.

Action research is commonly considered to be a democratic, empowering and humanizing form of inquiry (Selender, 1997; Greenwood and Levin, 1998). Though teachers played a very limited role in the research study, the action research design encouraged active teacher participation in the development, implementation, refinement and production of the teaching package. The researcher played a minimal role in the process of development of the unit and provided input upon request only. It was intended as a democratic and empowering process for teachers. However, it was an equally enlightening and empowering experience for the researcher. Through direct experience of working in collaboration with school teachers in school-based curriculum development focusing on promoting students' sense of national identity, the researcher could further his understanding of practices of civic learning and action research in primary schools. Moreover, the evolutionary and developmental process generated by the action research could facilitate the development of communities of inquiry (the researcher and his colleagues in the QEF Project Team as well as teachers in the pilot school) within communities of practice (the practice of promoting civic education in the primary schools)

(Friedman, 2001).

Setting: The School-Based Civic Education Project

Background to the Development of School-Based Civic Education Project

The development of the QEF project and the detailed planning of this study are presented in Chapters I and VI respectively. As part of the QEF project, this school-based civic education project represented an effort made by individual teachers and schools in collaboration with a tertiary institute in the HKSAR in addressing the needs of society in promoting children's sense of national identity. It was to be implemented through a General Studies unit focusing on the study of China. A new unit title, "The Best of China" was proposed and the objectives of the unit were to (1) enhance pupils' understanding of their mother country, the PRC by means of three focused studies, i.e. the Great Wall, the Yangtze River and Confucius, (2) promote their sense of national identity and patriotism through these studies and (3) encourage the development of a critical and open mind in investigating issues related to China. It included three sub-themes, namely the Great Wall, the Yangtze River and Confucius. The preparatory

work started in mid-May 2000 and the teaching unit was trialled in the period from late October to December 2000. The final teaching package was refined and produced in July 2001 for distribution to all member schools of the QEF project.

The School and its Civic Education Curriculum

The school was situated in a large private housing estate in a new town in the HKSAR. It was a well established primary school in the district and was run by a religious organization but funded by the government. The school was a standard primary school adopting the centralized curriculum provided by the education authority. Similar to most primary schools in the HKSAR, this school did not offer a separate subject for civic education. It followed a permeation approach in promoting civic learning. Among the different subjects in the formal curriculum, this school, like other mainstream schools, relied quite heavily on the subject of General Studies for civic education. Thus, this school-based civic education project was designed at the outset to be implemented via the General Studies curriculum.

As a Sister serving the church, the school head was committed to the development of

“good” citizens. There was a strong emphasis on promoting children’s national consciousness and civic virtues in the informal curriculum of the pilot school. For instance, the national anthem was sung in the school assembly every alternate week; the national flag was hoisted on all the important dates, such as the national day, the school speech day, days for celebration of historical events related to the nation, and so on. Extra-curricular activities related to the themes of moral education were also organized, such as election of prefects with the best performance, design of thank you card competitions, visits to the home of national heroes, such as Dr. Sun Yat Sun and other historical sites related to the development of the nation, book report competitions on the biography of Dr Sun Yat Sun, displays and exhibitions on visits to the Mainland, Chinese dance and music performances and appreciations, and so on. They aimed to heighten pupils’ awareness of their Chineseness and further their understanding of their mother country.

The General Studies curriculum through which the school-based civic education project was to be implemented was adopted from the centralized curriculum of HKSAR. There was a standardized teaching syllabus for all classes at the same level. In reality, teaching of this subject was to a large extent textbook bound in this school. Most General Studies

teachers taught according to what was provided in the textbooks. Hence, there was a bias towards the teaching of content in this subject and using the didactic approach in transmitting the information to pupils. Teachers rarely did any curriculum tailoring or developed their own school-based curriculum. There was also little effort in promoting pupils' learning in the other two important domains of learning in the subject curriculum, i.e. attitudes/values and skills. On the other hand, despite the fact that General Studies was a core subject in the primary curriculum, teachers and parents did not perceive it as an important subject which enjoyed the same status as other core subjects, such as English, Chinese and Mathematics. Hence, there were favourable as well as unfavourable factors influencing the development and implementation of civic education in this pilot school.

The Participants

The participants in this study included the researcher who was also the adviser to the school-based project, the head teacher and all the teachers teaching General Studies in the pilot school. Among the General Studies teachers, four P.5 teachers were nominated by the head teacher as participant teachers of the school-based project. They participated



actively in the development of the project. The study also involved 145 Primary 5 pupils studying in this school. As reported in Chapter 1, a formal agreement was signed between the pilot school and the QEF project team before the commencement of the project. All the participant teachers were well informed of their role in the development and evaluation of the school-based General Studies unit.

As the project involved a change in the teaching schedule in the P.5 General Studies curriculum, the school also issued a circular to all parents informing them about the replacement of the study unit on China by the civic education unit, “The Best of China”, at the beginning of the school term. In the circular, parents were also notified about the involvement of their children in the evaluation of the development of the school-based project. The school received no objection from parents about allowing their children to take part in the evaluation activities of the project.

One week before pupils were to complete a preliminary questionnaire (known later as the pre-test), the subject head made an announcement to all P.5 pupils informing them that the researcher would visit their classes to conduct the test. On the day of the pre-test, the researcher also made use of the opportunity to explain to them the purpose of the tests

and the other evaluation activities to be conducted by the researcher with them, such as the lesson observations, follow-up interview, journal writing, the post-tests and the evaluation questionnaire.

The researcher

The researcher, serving as adviser to the development of the school-based project, met the group of teachers regularly in the preparatory period. On average, meetings were held once every month to discuss the design and development of the teaching unit. Adhering to the participatory view, the researcher acted as a participant observer and stuck to his advising role throughout the preparatory stage. Teachers' views and interests were given the greatest attention and they constituted the basis for making curriculum and instructional decisions as far as possible. In the trialling and consolidation stage, the researcher continued to act as the participant observer, but changed gradually from the role of an adviser to a facilitator. He observed lessons conducted by different participant teachers and video taped the lessons. He also conducted follow-up interviews with both the teachers and pupils to find out how they experienced the teaching and learning processes in these lessons. The feedback obtained in the interviews was then discussed in

the meetings for refining the teaching package. They helped to provide different perspectives in viewing and evaluating the teaching and learning processes in these lessons and facilitate participant teachers to critically reflect on their own experience in implementing the project. It helped to generate practical knowledge which could inform and improve their practice.

The Participant Teachers

The group of teachers participating in the development and implementation of school-based civic education project included the subject head for General Studies, a senior teacher, a teacher who was strong in IT and a young teacher with only three years of teaching experience. They had all been teaching General Studies for more than two years. With the exception of the subject head, they did not join the project voluntarily. They became involved in this project because they had been appointed as General Studies teachers for Primary 5 in the year 2000/2001. They were not specially trained to teach General Studies. This is because in the HKSAR, there is no special requirement for teaching the subject. In fact, in most schools, class teachers are usually assigned the duty of teaching General Studies for their own classes. This may constitute another

unfavourable factor for the development and implementation of civic education via the General Studies curriculum.

The Pupils

All P.5 pupils were invited to take part in the evaluation of the teaching and learning of the school-based civic education project. Like other well-established primary schools centrally located in a new town in the HKSAR, the school attracted pupils with good family background. As a result, most pupils studying in this school came from families with a middle or lower middle class background. In fact, a majority of them lived in the private housing estates nearby in the new town. The P.5 pupils also displayed other key features of middle class children. One of these was their nationality. A survey of their nationality revealed that eight of them were also citizens of western countries, which included Canada, Australia and United Kingdom. These pupils had migrated to the above western countries with their parents in earlier days and had now returned to live in the territory. Another common characteristic among the pupils was that all of them had experience of travelling abroad. Nearly all of them had visited Mainland China and about two-thirds had travelled to Japan and other south-eastern Asian countries and another

one-third reported that they had been to various western countries, including US, Canada, Australia and Europe.

Collection of Data

The study was originally designed to examine through an action research project whether a school-based civic education project could contribute to the development of children's sense of national identity. It focused on identifying and analysing the major factors that accounted for the attainment or the non-attainment of its goals. The original design also aimed to identify and investigate the major problems and constraints encountered by teachers in the process of its development and implementation.

As the data collected via a variety of sources were processed, the nature of the data led the researcher to focus more on how teachers developed a school-based civic education project aiming at promoting children's sense of national identity through General Studies, a primary school subject in the formal curriculum. It also led to a practical concern for exploring how teachers' conceptions of citizenship and civic education influenced their aims, and in turn affected the development and implementation of the project. The data

also provided rich information on the major problems and issues experienced by teachers in the process of developing and implementing the school-based project. They helped to develop an “experiential understanding” (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) of existing practices in promoting civic learning and in particular, the fostering of children’s sense of national identity in the local context.

As reported in the previous section, the study adopted a participative inquiry in investigating the development and implementation of the school-based study unit. The study was also basically naturalistic and drew on both quantitative and qualitative data to examine its development at different stages. A multiplicity of methods was employed. They included questionnaire surveys, interviews (individual and group interviews), lesson observations, content analysis of curriculum documents and analysis of teachers’ and pupils’ journals as well as the researcher’s field notes.

Basically, the collection of data was driven by the research questions derived from the four groups of questions arising from the literature review as presented in Chapter IV. They provided the direction and guidance for this study in identifying the sources of data and the development of instruments for obtaining these data. The framework as adopted

from Gage’s (1978) “presage-context-process-product” continuum for the study of the development of this school-based civic education project also helped to determine what and how data were to be collected. The multiple sources of data collected provided a wide variety of evidence and were conducive to the development of “converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation” (Yin, 1994, p.92). It helped to promote the trustworthiness of the study. Table 5.1 summarizes the multiple methods of data collection used in this study.

Table 5.1: Summary of the multiple methods of data collection

| Development of the school-based civic project | Methods of data collection |
|--|---|
| Planning and preparation (Results see Chapters VI & VIII) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview (n=1) with the head teacher. • Questionnaire survey (n = 1) with all General Studies teachers (n=20) on their views on the implementation of the school-based civic education project. • Field notes (n=8) on team meetings. • Questionnaire survey (Pre-test) (n = 1) with pupils (n=145) on their perceptions and attitudes towards China. |
| Implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson observations (n=16) on selected trial lessons were |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>(Results see Chapters VI & VII)</p> | <p>video-tapped and the electronic records transcribed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up interviews (n=16) with participant teachers (n=4) were audio-tapped and transcribed. |
| <p>Evaluation and Improvement (Results see Chapter VIII)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-lesson observation group interview (n=16) with pupils (n = 3x4 = 12) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Groups of 3 from each P.5 class were selected by the participant teachers of the respective classes - Number of interviews for each group ranged from 7 to 2 depending on the number of lesson observations conducted on each class - All interviews were audio-tapped and transcribed. • Journal entries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher journal entries (n=12) - Pupils journal entries (n=83) • Questionnaire survey (n=1) with pupils (n=145) on their learning of the school-based civic education project. • Questionnaire surveys (post-tests) (n=2) with pupils (n=145) on their perceptions and attitudes towards China <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 administered immediately after the completion of the teaching of the unit - 1 administered 6 months later • Content analysis of the teaching package, “Best of China”. |

Data collection at the planning and preparatory stage was mainly concerned with the presage and the context of the development of the project. Following an initial interview with the head teacher, team meetings with the four participant teachers were conducted during which field notes were made. Questionnaire surveys with all General Studies teachers and P.5 pupils were also conducted before the commencement of the trial teaching. The former aimed to solicit teachers' views on the implementation of civic education through the General Studies curriculum. The latter, which served as a pre-test, was designed to investigate pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards their mother country.

Investigation of the process of implementation was mainly carried out through lesson observations and follow-up interviews with the participant teachers. To evaluate and improve the development and implementation of the project, both teachers and pupils were invited to write journals throughout the trial teaching period. Post-lesson observation group interviews were also conducted with 4 groups of pupils.

Upon completing the trial teaching, pupils' views on their learning experience was solicited through a questionnaire survey. Two post-tests were administered to assess

pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards China. One was administered immediately after the trial teaching and another six months later. Analysis of the content of the teaching package further helped to identify the key features of the school-based project and assess its impact on pupils' learning.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire (see Appendix A) was given to all teachers involved in the teaching of General Studies in the pilot school at the beginning of this research study. The survey was exploratory in nature. It was used to obtain an initial, comprehensive view of teachers' perceptions and beliefs on civic education, the promotion of children's sense of national identity and how and to what extent this important area of learning could be implemented via General Studies in their school. Items were grouped into different categories. These included the goals of civic education (1,3,8,10), the role of school in fostering national identity (18 & 20), the content to be selected in a civic education programme focusing on the development of national identity (4, 5, 11, 12, 14, & 15), the teaching strategies and methods of approach (2, 7, 13, 16, 17 & 19) and the implementation of the civic education curriculum in primary schools (6 & 9). A 5-point Likert scale was used to

solicit teachers' opinions on the implementation of civic education via General Studies in the primary curriculum. A pilot trial of the questionnaire was conducted with 3 General Studies teachers teaching in another well-established school in the core urban area. Their views were sought on the format of the questionnaire, the language used in writing the questionnaire items, and the clarity of the ideas expressed in the items. Minor amendments to the language of 4 items were made subsequently. The questionnaire survey helped to explore the setting for the development of the civic education project. All the 20 General Studies teachers took part in the survey and a 100% return rate was achieved.

Three questionnaires (see Appendices B, C, and D) were constructed to evaluate pupils' attitudes and perceptions of China both before and after the study of the General Studies unit on China. The content of these questionnaires were the same but the sequence and presentation of individual items changed. The first questionnaire was given to all pupils as a pre-test one week before the trial of the General Studies unit. The second and the third ones were given to the same group of pupils as post-tests immediately after the completion of the unit and six months later respectively. These questionnaires were used to investigate whether there had been any significant changes in pupils' attitudes and

perceptions towards China. The results were used to infer to what extent the study of the unit on China had had any impact on pupils' attitudes and perceptions of China and how they saw themselves as members of the People's Republic of China.

To construct a valid instrument for measuring pupils' sense of national identity, this study made reference to the methodology suggested by Helms (1996) and Bernal et al (1990) for measuring ethnic identity. According to them, ethnic identity is a "mental construction" and the collective identity of a person is "a person's internalized ascribed or achieved membership of social categories" (Helms, 1996, p. 162). To measure its development, they identify five components which constitute ethnic identity, namely ethnic self-identification, ethnic constancy, performance of ethnic role behaviours, ethnic knowledge and ethnic preferences and feelings. They constitute a conceptual framework for constructing questionnaire items for the instrument.

Taking into consideration Helms's conception of ethnic identity and the analysis of the nature and development of national identity in the literature review chapters, this study adopted a similar approach in measuring the development of children's national identity. It followed Helms's lines of argument that national identity was also socially constructed.

It is a collective identity reflecting one's internalized, ascribed and achieved membership in a political system, which was normally a "nation state". A similar conceptual framework was developed for constructing questionnaire items for the pre- and post-tests. Questionnaire items on four dimensions were constructed, namely national self-identification, performance of national role behaviours, knowledge about and preference and feelings for one's nation. The constancy of pupils' sense of national identity was difficult to assess in any one single measurement but could be identified through comparison of pupils' responses taken in different sittings. Pools of questionnaire items were developed and appropriate items were selected based on the principles of clarity, relatedness to the teaching content of the General Studies Unit to be tried out in late October in the pilot school, relatedness to pupils' daily experience and appropriateness to their cognitive development. Altogether 30 items were sampled for the pre-test questionnaire. A 4-point rating scale was used for the attitude tests taking into consideration of the pupils' limited capabilities in comprehending and discriminating a large number of categories in scaling situation (Peterson, 2000). Moreover, the main purpose of the tests was to make broad generalizations on pupils' performance as a group in the pre- and post-tests. A relative small number of categories would suffice.

A group of 6 Primary Five pupils from another well-established school in the core urban area was asked to complete the draft pre-test questionnaire in early October 2000. The researcher asked the class teacher of this group of children to select 2 high-, 2 middle- and 2 low-ability pupils to complete the questionnaire. They had not studied the school-based civic education unit but they had used the same General Studies textbook as their counterparts in the pilot school. The purpose for administering the draft pre-test with this group of children was to see whether the questionnaire was easy to complete for P.5 pupils, whether the language used for writing the items was appropriate, whether there were unfamiliar terms in the items, and whether the instructions of the questionnaire were clear. A follow-up group interview was conducted and pupils' opinions in doing the questionnaire items were sought. Basically, pupils did not find any problems in completing the questionnaire. They were able to complete the test within 20 minutes. All of them attempted all the questions. In the follow-up group interview, pupils reported that they did not find the questionnaire difficult to complete. Three pupils responded that they were not sure about the meaning of the terms in three of the items. Most of them also found one item was difficult to comprehend because it included two different ideas in the item. After reviewing their pattern of response, the research also found that one of the items was not worth asking because it did not reflect pupils' attitude towards the National

Anthem. The draft pre-test was revised taking into account the results of the pilot test and the group interview with this small group of children. The same instrument with modifications to its format and mode of presentation was used to posttest pupils to assess to what extent their attitudes and perceptions had been enhanced through the study of the Unit on China.

Another questionnaire (see Appendix E) was developed to solicit pupils' views on the implementation of the civic education unit. It was exploratory in nature. Pupils were asked about their views on the content, the teaching methods and their own learning outcomes achieved in the study of the civic education unit. They were also asked about their likes and dislikes in studying the unit and their perception of China and their own identity after finishing the unit. A 4-point rating scale was used in this questionnaire.

Again the same group of pupils who pilot tested the pre-test questionnaire was invited to complete the questionnaire. Consequently, the language of two of the questionnaire items was found clumsy and they were rewritten subsequently. The questionnaire was administered immediately after the completion of the study unit. With the help of the participant teachers, 100% return rate was achieved. Pupils were asked how they felt about the content, the learning activities, the teachers' presentations, and the learning

resources used in the study unit. The data gathered were used to cross check with the group interview results and pupils' journal writing.

All the questionnaires provided in the Appendices were originally written in Chinese and were translated into English by the researcher. All of them had been verified by an English language educator. The English version of the questionnaires was also back-translated to Chinese to check the accuracy of the translation by a research assistant of the QEF project team. No major discrepancies in meaning were found on the questionnaire items between the original and the back-translated version.

Questionnaire surveys are used extensively in educational research (Johnson & Turner, 2003). They are relatively economical, can ensure anonymity and the data obtained are easy to analyse for closed-ended items. But they are also susceptible to “faking” (Johnson & Turner, 2003), especially in attitude tests. Johnson and Turner identify a serious type of ‘faking’, “social desirability”, which is concerned with the desire of the subjects to appear to be socially desirable or normal. As a result, they respond to the questions according to what they perceive as socially desirable or normal rather than honestly. The reliability of attitude tests and evaluation questionnaires may also be adversely affected by “response

set” (Johnson & Turner, 2003). Respondents may tend to respond to all items with positive, negative or neutral answers or by guessing. These are the pitfalls in conducting questionnaire surveys. They may constitute a threat to the reliability of the survey results. For this reason, other forms of data collection are needed.

Observations

A naturalistic observation method was adopted in this study. Thus the unit of observation was naturally a single class period. As a participant inquirer, the researcher had been quite familiar with the classroom setting and could be quite focused in conducting lesson observations at an early stage. Adler and Adler (1994, p. 381) argue that familiarization of the settings and the key social groups and processes in operation enables the researchers to direct their attention to “a deeper, narrower portion of the people, behaviors, times, spaces, feelings, structure, and/or processes”. Sixteen trial lessons were observed. They were all conducted in the period of the trial stage of the study unit. All lessons observed by the researcher were video-tapped and transcribed for analysis. The results helped to develop “experiential understanding” of the curriculum and pedagogical approaches adopted by participant teachers in implementing the school-based project.

The basic principles for selecting lessons for observation were:

- a. those lessons taught by the participant teachers who were in charge of designing and developing one of the sub-themes and the relevant teaching materials;
- b. additional lessons which were considered to be significant in achieving the goal of the school-based civic education unit, i.e. the development of a sense of national identity.

As there were only three sub-themes in the study unit, one of the participant teachers was given the responsibility to provide support in the application of IT only. Hence, only two selected lessons taught by this teacher, but requiring the extensive use of IT resources, were observed. On the other hand, though the subject head was in charge of developing one sub-theme only, seven lessons conducted by him were observed because he was the initiator and leader of the project. It was assumed that he should have the best understanding of the project and could provide pupils with the most relevant learning experiences for achieving the objectives of the study unit. Evaluation of lessons taught by him could more accurately reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and pedagogical design employed in the school-based project. The senior teacher in charge of

developing the sub-theme on Confucius was observed four times and the young teacher responsible for the sub-theme on the Yangtze River Basin was observed thrice.

The focus of the lesson observations was on how the teaching and learning process unfolded and developed in the trial lessons. This study made reference to the “action-based framework for the analysis of teaching” developed by Alexander (2000, p.325) in analysing the observed trial lessons. The framework emphasizes three basic elements, namely, “frame”, “form” and “act”. According to Alexander, “The core acts of teaching (task, activity, interaction and judgement) are framed by classroom organization (space), pupil organization, time and curriculum and by classroom routines, rules and rituals. They are given form in the lesson or teaching session” (p. 325). Hence, the “core acts of teaching”, which included the tasks and activities, were identified in the observed lessons, such as PowerPoint presentations, role-playing, group discussions and so on. The frame of these tasks and activities was also described, i.e. how pupils were grouped, where the tasks and activities took place and the duration of the “acts”.

Interaction and judgement in the learning process were also analysed. The level and modes of pupil participation and interaction in the trial lessons were described and

summarized. Reference was also made to Habermas's (1979), Bloom's (1990), Preston's (1997) and Smith's (2001) conceptions of national identity and its development in examining "the learning discourse" developed in these lessons. The curriculum and pedagogical approaches as reflected in the learning process were also identified, described and evaluated in the light of the models of civic learning adopted by both the schools in the People's Republic of China and in the Western society represented by the US and UK systems. The observation data not only provided rich descriptions of the teaching and learning processes, but also served to triangulate the data collected via questionnaires and interviews in the study. A protocol of a lesson observation guide can be found in Appendix F.

There is always the issue of "observer bias" (Werner & Schoepfle, 1987, p.259) in conducting observation in naturalistic settings. But there seems to be a common understanding that it is inevitable for researchers to bring in their own views, perspectives, values and bias in observing and recording the data. In this study, the researcher adopted the method of participant observation in conducting the lesson observations and assumed the role of "observer-as-participant" (Adler & Adler, 1994, p.380) in investigating teachers' trial teaching. Adopting such a role could allow the researcher to interact

“casually and nondirectly” with the subjects of observation (p.380). The study did not aim to achieve purely “descriptive observation” (Werner & Schoepfle, 1987, p.263) of the trial lessons. The researcher was more inclined to use the “focused observation” advocated by Werner and Schoepfle (1987, p.263). In addition, the observed trial lessons were also video-tapped to provide a more detailed account of the trial teaching. To further help the researcher make sense of the observed data, follow-up interviews with the participant teachers were conducted.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews (interview protocols see Appendices G, H, I and J) were designed and conducted with the head teacher, participant teachers and pupils. The school head was interviewed before the commencement of the preparatory work for the school-based civic education project. The interview focused on investigating how the head teacher perceived the goal of civic education in primary schools, the essential characteristics of a “good” citizen that she hoped to develop through the school curriculum, to what extent civic education was developed and implemented in the pilot school, the difficulties and constraints in promoting civic learning in primary schools and

why the school participated in the project. It aimed to provide further information for investigating the setting of the study.

Follow up interviews were conducted with both participant teachers and pupils after each lesson observation. All the four participant teachers were interviewed. The interviews with teachers were semi-structured and face-to-face. The interviews were conducted immediately after the observed lessons as far as possible. However, teachers working in primary schools in the HKSAR are very busy. Most of them were still working in a bi-sessional setting which meant that there were in fact, two schools operating on one school campus. They had a very tight daily work schedule and had to complete all their tasks within the five and a half hours morning or afternoon session. The teachers who participated in this project worked in the morning session. They did not have much time to participate in the interviews and the normal interviewing time was around 15 to 20 minutes though sometimes they could spare more time if they had a free period after the observed lessons.

The semi-structured interviews were exploratory in nature. They focused on exploring how the participant teachers perceived and felt about the teaching and learning process in

the lessons observed by the researcher. Besides commenting on the design and implementation of the learning tasks and pupils' performance in the lessons, teachers were also prompted to reflect on the rationale and principles for designing and implementing the lessons as planned and the difficulties and constraints encountered in conducting the learning activities. They were further asked to suggest measures for improvement. In the first interview with all the participant teachers, their views on the qualities of "good" citizens, the goal of civic education, the role of teachers in the preparation of "good citizens, the role of General Studies in promoting civic education and how civic education could be effectively taught and promoted in the primary curriculum were also solicited. The rich data collected provided understanding of the presage and context as well as the process of the development of the project. The data also enabled triangulation with the results of the teacher survey and the lesson observations.

Semi-structured group interviews with pupils were conducted immediately or on the next day after the observation of the lessons. Fontana and Frey (1994, p.365) point out that group interview, being a qualitative data collection technique, is "inexpensive, data rich, flexible, stimulating to respondents, recall aiding and cumulative and elaborative over

and above individual responses". Participant teachers were requested to select three pupils from each class to attend the follow up group interviews. The three pupils selected were made up of one high-, one middle- and one low-ability pupil, and included both sexes. Four groups of pupils were interviewed which made up to a total of 12 pupils. As in the interviews with teachers, there were severe time constraints in holding interviews with pupils. They did not have any free period in their timetable. The only time for interviewing them was in the recess time which lasted for no more than 15 minutes. As a result, the group interviews were short and the data collected were limited.

Interviews with pupils were mainly concerned with how they felt about their learning in the lessons they had just attended. They were asked to recall what they had learnt and what learning processes or activities they had gone through. Pupils were also asked to what extent they liked or disliked the processes or activities and how different the processes and activities were from those in the previous study units. There were other major problems in conducting group interviews with primary pupils. Though some pupils were very expressive and articulate, some were shy and not able to express themselves clearly. Hence, in some of the group interviews, the discussion was dominated by one pupil, normally the high-ability one. There was also a tendency for the development of a

group culture which could interfere with individual expression in some of the group interviews (Fontana & Frey, 1994). This posed difficulties in soliciting adequate and valid information from the interviewees and decreased the trustworthiness of this data collection method. In this study, as the groups for interviews were small, with only three children per group, the researcher could identify the problems at an early stage and respond to them quickly. For example, he sometimes needed to restore a balance among the children to provide a supportive climate for evaluating the lesson and providing feedback freely and honestly. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed.

Journal and Field Notes

All participant teachers were encouraged to write journals on the lessons in which they participated in the trial period. As they were unfamiliar with journal writing, they were given a standardized format for writing their journals (see Appendix K). Three questions were provided in the journal form for teachers to reflect on. The questions were:

1. Are you satisfied with the teaching of this lesson/topic? What do you like best in this lesson/topic?

2. What have you achieved in this lesson/topic? What is the evidence which shows that you have achieved these results?
3. How would you improve this lesson/topic if you could try it out again?

These questions were used in the evaluation of student teachers' trial teaching and teaching practice in the researcher's teacher education institute. They facilitate a more focused reflection on teachers' trial teaching. The main purpose of asking teachers to complete the journals was to collect more data on the process and outcomes of the trial teaching from the teacher's perspective. It helped to substantiate and triangulate the results of both the lesson observations and the follow-up interviews with teachers. But because of teachers' heavy workload, it was subsequently agreed that only one journal entry was to be completed by each participant teacher on each sub-theme. This might pose problems to teachers in reflecting on the trial lessons. Reflection would tend to be less focused.

Pupils were also requested to write journals on their experience in attending the General Studies lessons during the trial period of the study unit. A standardized format of journal writing was designed for pupils to write down how they thought and felt about the

learning process and content which they experienced in the lessons (see Appendix L). To avoid over-burdening teachers with the tasks of monitoring pupils' journal writing, the researcher asked teachers to provide only selected pupils' writing on lessons of each sub-theme. For each topic, a minimum of six pupils was required. As with the group interviews, those selected for participating in the journal writing were to include high-, middle- and low-ability pupils. Despite the above arrangements, it was still difficult for participant teachers to monitor pupils' journal writing. It was anticipated that pupils might not be too serious in writing their journals. First, journal writing was not an assignment. Second, they were also heavily loaded with homework each day. Most probably, pupils would focus on the content of the lessons and to neglect those more subtle and hidden aspects of the lessons. Generally speaking, it would be difficult for most Primary 5 pupils to provide a critical reflection on the teaching and learning processes taking place in the various lessons. Their observations might also lack the appropriate depth. Nevertheless, the data collected, did to a certain extent, reflect pupils' thinking and perceptions about participating in the learning tasks in the various topics. They were used to substantiate and triangulate with other sources of data collected in the trial period.

The field notes of the researcher in attending meetings with the participant teachers at

different stages of the development of the project also served to substantiate and triangulate data gathered from other sources. However, these were not formal meetings and no minutes were taken. As the researcher had to play both the roles of a participant and an inquirer in attending the meetings, most of the field notes were made in retrospect after the meetings. The field notes were neither full accounts of the meetings nor systematic descriptions of the observations of the researcher. They were brief accounts of highly selected observations of significant incidents identified by the researcher in the meetings. But they could supplement and cross reference data collected from interviews and lesson observations and help to fill in some information gaps in the study of teachers' intentions as well as in the context of the development of the school-based civic education project.

Curriculum Materials and Documents

Another very important source of data for studying the setting for the development and implementation of the project was the curriculum documents provided by the panel head on the extra-curricular activities related to moral and civic education in the pilot school. An analysis of the nature and content of these activities provided useful information on

the informal and hidden curriculum of the school. The curriculum materials developed by the participant teachers for use in the trial lessons as well as the revised version included in the final teaching package also provided fundamental data for investigating the teaching and learning of the school-based civic education unit. They reflected how teachers in the pilot school perceived their role as primary school teachers in nation building and how they attempted to achieve their perceived goal of civic education through employing different teaching and learning strategies and resources. The findings drawn from the document analysis helped to answer research questions 3 and 4 and triangulate with those derived from interviews and lesson observations. Case study techniques such as pattern-matching, identification of common themes and explanation building were used in conducting the document analysis.

Data Analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) stress that formal analysis begins early in a qualitative study and is nearly completed by the end of data collection. In fact, Miles and Huberman (1994, p.430) suggest “analysis via study design”. To derive meaning from the data collected and to inform future data collection, an ongoing analysis strategy was adopted in this

study. Following Janesick's (1994) conception of data analysis in a qualitative research design, the researcher attempted to develop categories, themes and patterns from the data through constant comparative analysis throughout the study. Reference was made to the four research questions in Chapter IV arising from the literature review in making sense of the categories, themes and patterns and in identifying and examining relationships among them. Miles and Huberman (1994) propose a set of tactics for deriving meaning from the qualitative data. They provide useful tools for interpreting and analyzing data gathered in the study of the school-based civic education project. Tactics employed in this study included "noting patterns and themes", "seeing plausibility", "clustering", "counting", "making contrasts and comparisons", "partitioning variables", "subsuming particulars into the general", "factoring", "noting relations between variables", "finding intervening variables", and "building a logical chain of evidence".

An action research design allowed the integration of quantitative and qualitative research methods in the study of the development and implementation of the school-based civic education study unit. The quantitative data gathered through questionnaire surveys were important sources of data for developing understanding of the setting, teachers' views and perceptions of the civic education and General Studies curricula in the primary school,

pupils' perceptions and feelings towards the civic education lessons and their attitudinal and perceptual changes about the PRC after studying the study unit. The quantitative data were analysed by statistical methods. The results generated helped to substantiate, triangulate with and further elaborate on the findings derived from the qualitative studies.

Triangulation

"Triangulation is meant to be a heuristic tool for the researcher" (Janesick, 1994, p.215).

To validate findings, this study made extensive use of this heuristic tool. Following Denzin's idea, Janesick (1994, p.214-215) identifies five basic types of triangulation for achieving the validity and reliability of qualitative research findings. They are "data triangulation", "investigator triangulation", "theory triangulation", "methodological triangulation" and "interdisciplinary triangulation". Basically, three triangulations were used in this study, namely, "data", "investigator" and "methodological". This study employed a multiplicity of ways of gathering data from multiple sources of data. It also incorporated different or even rival perspectives in making sense of the categories, themes and patterns arising from the data and interpreting their relationships. Moreover, as a participant inquirer, the researcher could mobilize participant teachers to help to

gather and interpret pupils' views in the implementation of the study unit. Thus with the aid of this heuristic tool, the data analysis conducted in this study aimed to “treat the evidence fairly, to produce compelling analytic conclusions” (Yin, 1994, p.103).

Chapter VI

Results I

Initiation, Planning and Design of the School-based Civic Education Project

Following the research questions as specified in Chapter IV, this chapter presents and critically examines the results of the interview with the head teacher and the first interviews with each of the participant teachers, the questionnaire survey with all the General Studies teachers and the analysis of the field notes of the team meetings with the group of participant teachers in the pilot school. The qualitative and quantitative data collected through these methods provided detailed information on how the project was initiated and developed in the pilot school. The multiple sources and methods of data collection also allowed the application of “data” and “method” triangulations (Janesick, 1994) to achieve validity and reliability of the research findings

Initiation and development of the school-based civic education project

Results of the interview with the head teacher and the first interviews with the four participant teachers

The head teacher and the four participant teachers were interviewed. As explained in Chapter V, the interviews adopted a semi-structured design. Separate interview protocols for the head teacher and the first interview with participant teachers were developed to solicit their views on the initiation and planning of the study unit. With the consent of the head teachers and participant teachers, all interviews were audio taped. The records of the interviews were then transcribed. The scripts were studied for the first time by the researcher. Initial themes were identified and codes were assigned to these themes. The scripts were studied the second time to identify other themes which emerged from the interviews. Additional codes were created for further analysis of the data. The scripts were then thoroughly studied the third time based on the coding system developed through the first and second reading of the scripts. Consequently, four major themes were identified. They were closely related to the major questions listed in the interview protocols. These themes are presented and analysed in the following sections.

1. The conception of citizenship and civic education of the head teacher and the participant teachers

In the interview, the head teacher argued that she would like to see her pupils develop into “useful and civilized citizens” within the six years of primary education. She said, “.... the term ‘useful’ can be defined as having a different value/attitude from the majority of our society. For instance, the majority in our society is too keen about their own self interest. Hence, in school, we have to let them realize that one’s self interest should not be our main concern.”

She also envisaged that a “useful and civilized citizen” should willingly be unselfish and tolerant, as these were central beliefs of her church. She further commented on the quality of “a good citizen”. She stressed that “one has to care for, love, and help others”. A good citizen should also “stand up for the right things”, “be conscious of positive attitudes and show concern to things happening around you in society” and most important of all, have “the willingness to vote”.

To her, civic education was “to teach our school children the correct

values/attitudes and civic awareness when they are still young". Recently, she had found that "the confidence of our school children is very low. Their self concept is also getting worse and worse. Moreover, they are not willing to take any responsibilities at all. They cannot face any failures." Thus she stressed that civic education should also aim at enhancing children's self concept and educating them to be more willing to take up responsibility.

The head teacher also had a strong commitment to developing children not only as citizens of Hong Kong but as Chinese nationals. She said, "Perhaps because I am a nun and serve in a much localized religious body, I can feel that I have developed a deep sense of belonging towards Hong Kong as well as China. Hence, I really want to promote this and pass it on to the next generation".

The interview showed that the head teacher was greatly influenced by the Chinese conception of citizenship which emphasized the development of the moral person and the importance of responsibility and sacrifice by the individual. But her conception of citizenship was also influenced by her Catholic faith. Hence, ideas related to the Western conception of citizenship, such as independent thinking and

participation were also valued. The head teacher stressed that the election of the best performing prefects by all pupils had become an annual school event aiming at promoting pupil participation in school affairs and a positive attitude towards voting.

The participant teachers seldom commented directly on citizenship in the interviews. But in their comments on civic education, two main ideas about citizenship could be identified. First, they all recognized that there existed a close relationship between citizenship and politics. A participant teacher said, “Nowadays, civic education focuses mainly on the study of environmental protection, things related to one’s personal life. I think these are not the core elements of civic education. The core elements should be those related to political education.” Another teacher responded to the researcher in the interview, “We have to do it gradually. When we talk of politics, we must be cautious. Parents may have strong reaction”. Teachers also tended to relate citizenship with morality. One of the participant teacher stressed that “it is about developing understanding of oneself as well as the society. It is about learning to be a good citizen”. They thought that citizenship was concerned with the character of the individual person.

All of the participant teachers had a clearer concept of civic education than citizenship, though most of their descriptions of civic education were still quite vague. When asked about the focus of civic education in primary school, a senior teacher gave the following remark, “For lower classes, I think we can start off with the personal matters. But for higher year groups, it is more important on interpersonal matters, say, those related to the society, groups, and of course the communication with parents”. The subject head provided a more detailed and concrete account of what civic education was in the primary curriculum. He emphasised that “it should stress more on the personal and societal aspects in the primary school. It means that pupils should be provided with opportunities to participate and understand society. Through such learning experiences, they would be taught to be good citizens. At present, the teaching of the national community is limited.” In general, they thought civic education should be concerned mainly with the development of citizens with good characters. All of them pointed out that civic education could be conducted through assemblies and could list major themes introduced through the assemblies. These included honesty, courage, filial piety, law abiding, hardworking, concern for others and the environment. Two teachers also mentioned the development of pupils’ civic

awareness and their Chinese identity through civic education.

The above analysis showed that participant teachers did not have a clear conception of citizenship. But they had some experience in conducting civic education in their school. Thus, they had a rough idea of what civic education was. Their conception of citizenship and civic education was essentially a Chinese one. The focus was on fostering pupils' personal development. They stressed the teaching of "correct" values which were mostly traditional Chinese moral values. The development of children's civic awareness and their Chinese identity was also a major concern of the teachers.

2. The civic mission of the primary school

In the interview, the head teacher stressed that the six years of primary education was fundamental to children in shaping their character and values and helped to build a firm foundation for the development of "useful citizens". Moreover, she also perceived that the civic mission of school was to educate both the pupils and the teachers. She said, "The function of the morning assemblies is not just for

teaching our pupils, but also to educate our staff in the correct values and attitudes.

After all, by participating in this project, I really would like our colleagues to educate themselves and enhance their civic awareness. Then they can pass the positive ideas to our pupils.”

Results of the interviews with teachers showed that they also agreed that schools had a mission to produce “good” citizens both for Hong Kong and the national community. But they were more inclined to focus on the former because they thought that it was not so distant from pupils’ daily experience and could be understood and developed in the context of pupils’ local community. They showed less interest on the latter because it was remote from both teachers and pupils.

There seemed to be a consensus on the civic mission of school among teachers and the head teacher in the pilot school. They acknowledged that schools had an obligation to train “useful and civilized” citizens and teachers should help children develop a sense of national identity. It further showed that they were greatly influenced by the Chinese conception of citizenship.

3. A permeation approach to civic education in the primary school

The interview with the head teacher showed that she was not in favour of offering a separate subject on civic education. She stressed that a permeation approach should be adopted in preparing “useful” citizens for the HKSAR and the PRC. On the whole, she was satisfied with the promotion of civic learning through the informal and hidden curriculum. She cited numerous examples to illustrate how civic learning was promoted through these curriculum areas in her school, for instance, talks on moral education and singing of the national anthem in school assemblies, flying the National flag on national day and at important school functions, formal recognition of the best performing prefects, and nurturing of appropriate values and civic virtues through the school ethos and so on. Particular emphasis was given to the last aspect of civic learning. She said, “The development of ethos depends on the daily practices in the school life. Say, queuing up, cleanliness, conscientious, simple, not keen on using brand name commodities, caring for others. All these are the values that we are directing our pupils to develop through our school life.”

But she was not satisfied with the implementation of civic education in the formal curriculum. Her dissatisfaction with the implementation of civic education via General Studies was mainly concerned with the content selection and organization of civic learning in the subject curriculum. She had the following observation:

“However, I think the way knowledge is presented in General Studies is very problematic. It is presented in a very traditional manner, topics after topics in a fragmented way. ... The organization of the textbook is also not favourable and supportive for teaching through activities. To follow the schedule as prescribed by the textbook, teachers have to sacrifice pupils’ learning”.

Consequently, she hoped to introduce innovative ideas to improve the General Studies curriculum and the pedagogical approaches to this subject through participating in this school-based civic education project.

In contrast to the head teacher, all participant teachers with the exception of the subject head had vague ideas on the development of the civic education curriculum in the pilot school. All of them agreed that General Studies could

provide the curriculum space for promoting civic education. A common response to questions about the teaching of values, attitudes and the sentiments towards the state was, “I think with the wide coverage of the curriculum, it is easier to teach these via General Studies”. However, they recognized the great problems in planning and designing a school-based study unit in the General Studies curriculum aiming at fostering pupils’ sense of national identity. In the interviews, teachers claimed that they had difficulties in the selection of content. They admitted that they did not have adequate knowledge of China. Given the broad objectives and extensive areas of learning to be covered in the study unit, they did not know whether they had made the right choice of content. One teacher said, “At the beginning, we were really puzzled. Even if we had chosen a theme, we still would have to consider what to teach out of the many possible topics”. Teachers could only choose the curriculum content arbitrarily, based on their own understanding and subjective views. Moreover, they complained that they could not find much help from the curriculum documents, such as the General Studies syllabus, or the Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools.

Participant teachers also had problems in designing, selecting and adapting the

pedagogical approaches for the thematic unit. They responded that the training programme provided by the QEF Project Team was useful in familiarizing them the basic principles and common teaching strategies for designing the unit. But they reported that they still had problems in applying these strategies to develop the teaching package which contained so many topics, and topics of such diverse nature. A participant teacher exclaimed, "I have tried my best to find the most appropriate method to teach pupils about the sayings of Confucius. But then, I couldn't figure out that there are so many different activities which can be used for this particular topic."

The above analysis shows that although the head teacher and the participant teachers shared a view that General Studies could provide the curriculum space for implementing civic education, they had different concerns about adopting the permeation approach via the General Studies curriculum. The head teacher was not satisfied with the organization and content selection of civic learning in the General Studies curriculum whereas the participant teachers expressed their worries about the difficulties in developing and implementing a school-based General Studies unit aiming at promoting children's sense of national identity.

4. Introducing curriculum and pedagogical change in civic education through school-based curriculum development

In the interview, the head teacher reported she wanted to bring about change in the teaching and learning of civic education through participation in the QEF project.

The decision on the area of study to be developed for the school-based project was also made by her in consultation with the subject head of General Studies.

The participant teachers in their interviews confirmed that the project was initiated by the head teacher. The theme of the General Studies unit was also proposed by the head teacher based on the suggested curriculum areas provided by the QEF Project Team. All except the subject head of General Studies revealed that they had not participated in any school-based curriculum development. They simply followed the textbooks in teaching General Studies.

All the participant teachers said that they were nominated by the principal to take part in this project in the capacity of P. 5 General Studies teachers. Among them, only the subject head of General Studies could explain clearly the rationale and

purpose for participating in the development of this school-based project. He echoed some of the views expressed by the head teacher, such as the strong commitment of the school in promoting civic education and in enhancing children's understanding of China and of their civic awareness as justifications for taking part in the project. He also shared the view that participation in the project could enhance teachers' competence in school-based curriculum development and in developing and producing curriculum packages. He stressed that it provided good opportunities for teachers to learn by doing. But the other members of the group were not able to spell out clearly the purpose of participating in the project.

The participant teachers were, in general, positive towards the development of the project though they had not joined it voluntarily. They could recall the curriculum and pedagogical approaches introduced in the workshops and seminars organized by the QEF project. They could also quote examples illustrating how they attempted to apply these approaches in the various topics in the study unit, such as the application of the inquiry approach in studying the geography of China, conducting role play to illustrate Confucius's teaching and so on. But the participant teachers still encountered real difficulties in developing the school-based General Studies

unit.

A major problem that teachers faced in developing the project was the varied demands on their time and effort. They pointed out that the preparation of the study unit took nearly half a year to complete. Then it took another 3 months to refine the teaching package. It was enormous work. A teacher provided a vivid description of the problem. She said, "The hardest bit is that we have to find time to sit down to discuss, to locate resources, to consider how to design and organize learning activities. Then we have to develop work sheets as well as CD-ROMs, also discussion cards. You really can't do these things individually. If the same happens to every other subject, it would be impossible for us to deal with." These were key issues for the practitioners and the researcher could not take them lightly.

The interview results presented above further highlighted a more serious problem in developing civic education in primary schools in HKSAR. In the pilot school, the decision on curriculum development seemed to be monopolized by the head teacher. Teachers only followed what was prescribed for them. The top-down approach in curriculum decision-making was in contrast to the spirit of a school-based approach

to civic education which emphasizes active participation and collaboration among teachers. This had implications for the hidden curriculum of the school. There was a risk that the curriculum developed might tend to be more prescriptive, more teacher-centred, more fragmented and might even be more rigid than a centralized curriculum because it would be developed in a more hasty and piece-meal manner and with fewer resources and less manpower support than a centralized one. This was a great challenge to the researcher who was also playing the role of an adviser and a co-worker in the team developing the school-based civic education project.

Participant teachers needed to be empowered and take part actively in the process of the development of the project. They should not see the area of study as given.

They should be encouraged to reinterpret the theme and be provided with ample opportunities to participate in the planning and development of the content and the teaching approaches of the study unit.

Results of the questionnaire survey conducted with all the teachers involved in the teaching of General Studies in 2000/2001 in the pilot school.

A survey was conducted with all the teachers involved in the teaching of General Studies

in the pilot school at the beginning of this research study. As explained in Chapter V, it was exploratory in nature. It aimed to develop further understanding of the context of the development of the civic education project by soliciting teachers' views on civic education, the promotion of children's sense of national identity and how and to what extent this important area of learning could be implemented via General Studies. A 5-point Likert Scale was used in this questionnaire survey. All the 20 General Studies teachers took part in the survey and the return rate was 100%. The results of the survey are presented and analysed in the following sections.

1. The General Studies teachers in the pilot school

Table 6.1 gives the professional details about the General Studies teachers in the pilot school.

| | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Number of General Studies teachers surveyed | Male | 7 (35%) |
| | Female | 13 (65%) |
| General Studies teachers who were subject trained | Trained | 13 (65%) |
| | Untrained | 7 (35%) |
| General Studies teachers who were trained | Trained | 8 (40%) |

| | | |
|--|---------------|----------|
| in civic education | Untrained | 12 (60%) |
| Experience in teaching General Studies | Yes | 16 (80%) |
| | No | 4 (20%) |
| Experience in teaching Civic Education | Yes | 13 (65%) |
| | No | 7 (35%) |
| Years of teaching experience | Below 5 | 3 (15%) |
| | 5 – 20 | 9 (45%) |
| | 21 – 30 | 4 (20%) |
| | 30 or above | 4 (20%) |
| Age of General Studies teachers | Below 25 | 3 (15%) |
| | 25 – 40 | 10 (50%) |
| | 40 – 50 | 3 (15%) |
| | Above 50 | 4 (20%) |
| Qualifications of General Studies teachers | Teacher Cert. | 13 (65%) |
| | BEd | 5 (25%) |
| | PGDE | 2 (10%) |

Table 6.1: The professional details about the General Studies teachers in the pilot school (N=20)

Similar to other mainstream primary schools, General Studies was a core subject in this school. Following the central curriculum, five lessons were allocated to this

subject per week. As a result, 20 teachers, who accounted for nearly 60% of the total number of teachers, were involved in the teaching of the subject. The results of the survey showed that 35% of the General Studies teachers were not trained as General Studies teachers and 60% of them had not received any training in civic education. It confirmed a long existing fact in the HKSAR primary schools that though General Studies is a core subject in the primary curriculum, it remains a marginal subject. The quality of teaching of the subject has never been a major concern of head teachers. Any teacher can be appointed to teach General Studies.

Civic education has the same problem as General Studies in recruiting well trained teachers in HKSAR primary schools. Since civic education was to be implemented via General Studies in this school, the problem of untrained teachers became more acute. It meant that some General Studies teachers in this school were both untrained in General Studies and in civic education. But they were required to teach civic education through General Studies. The survey results further showed that most General Studies teachers (85%) had 5 years or more of teaching experience and 50% of them were in the age group from 25 to 40. That might suggest that this group of teachers were more experienced and could adapt to new and changing environments

and, at the same time, be more receptive to new ideas. They might also be more innovative in experimenting in different pedagogical and curriculum approaches.

2. Teachers' perceptions of implementing civic education via General Studies

To analyse the survey data, the five options in the questionnaire, "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Neutral", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" were given the values of "2", "1", "0", "-1" and "-2". The cumulated percentages for the Agree and Disagree and the mean rating for each item were calculated. As there was a "Neutral" category, Agree and Disagree did not add up to 100%. The survey results of teachers' opinions on the implementation of civic education via General Studies in the primary curriculum are summarized in Table 6.2.

Results of the questionnaire survey showed that the mean scores of the questionnaire fell between -0.21 to 1.2. Sixteen of the items had means scores of above 0.5 but less than 1. Two items had mean scores slightly above 1 and another two just below 1. The range of the mean score was small. Detailed description and analysis of the survey results and their implications for the development of the school-based civic education

project are provided in the following section.

Table 6.2: The survey results on General Studies teachers' opinion on implementing civic education via General Studies (N=20)

| Item No. | Rank Order | Questionnaire Item | Strongly Agree & Agree % | Strongly Disagree & Disagree % | Mean Rating | S.D. |
|----------|------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|------|
| 3 | 1 | Civic education should stress developing pupils' independent and critical thinking. | 95 | 0 | 1.2 | 0.52 |
| 16 | 2 | The study of major controversial issues in the HKSAR is conducive to the development of pupils' identification with both the local and national community. | 90 | 0 | 1.1 | 0.55 |
| 2 | 3 | Encouraging pupils to participate in the local community is an effective way of promoting pupils' identification with the state, PRC. | 85 | 10 | 0.95 | 0.83 |
| 4 | 4 | To foster positive attitudes towards the PRC, pupils' understanding of the history, geography and culture of China should be enhanced. | 75 | 5 | 0.9 | 0.79 |
| 20 | 5 | To develop pupils' identification with the state, we should first help our pupils develop a sense of belonging to the local community. | 85 | 5 | 0.9 | 0.64 |
| 13 | 6 | Patriotism should be indoctrinated to help to foster pupils' sense of national identity. | 85 | 5 | 0.85 | 0.59 |
| 18 | 7 | The strong emphasis on the study of local community can help pupils identify with the society. | 85 | 0 | 0.85 | 0.37 |
| 7 | 8 | The most effective means of fostering pupils' national identity is to arouse their national sentiment and to inculcate among them a strong love of their own country, the PRC. | 75 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.52 |
| 14 | 9 | Primary pupils should be given the opportunities to investigate controversial issues related to contemporary China, such as the June Fourth Incident, the Cultural Revolution, the Independence | 70 | 5 | 0.8 | 0.77 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|---|----|----|-------|-------|
| | | of Taiwan, etc. | | | | |
| 15 | 10 | To heighten pupils' national sentiment, all major school functions should begin with the singing of the national anthem and/or the flying of the national flag. | 75 | 5 | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| 17 | 11 | I have a good understanding of values education and can help pupils develop the ability in making independent values judgement.. | 75 | 0 | 0.8 | 0.52 |
| 1 | 12 | Civic education in the HKSAR primary schools should aim at developing patriotic citizens who love and support their mother country, the People's Republic of China (PRC). | 70 | 5 | 0.75 | 0.72 |
| 9 | 13 | My school can provide a variety of learning experience to help pupils identify with their nation. | 79 | 10 | 0.65 | 0.75 |
| 6 | 14 | My school has been actively promoting pupils' understanding and concern for their mother country, the PRC. | 60 | 10 | 0.6 | 0.82 |
| 10 | 15 | To develop a critical understanding of China among primary pupils is more important than to foster an unconditional love of the Chinese nation in the HKSAR. | 50 | 0 | 0.6 | 0.68 |
| 12 | 16 | Pupils should be taught the major developments accomplished by the PRC since 1949 to help to maintain among themselves a positive image of their home country. | 65 | 10 | 0.6 | 0.75 |
| 8 | 17 | As a General Studies teacher, I can help my pupils develop good understanding of China because I know my country well. | 65 | 15 | 0.55 | 0.999 |
| 19 | 18 | The HKSAR primary schools should model themselves on counterparts in the mainland in introducing ethics and character education in the formal curriculum. | 65 | 15 | 0.5 | 0.95 |
| 5 | 19 | There is adequate curriculum space in the Hong Kong primary school curriculum for implementing a participatory and child-centred civic education programme. | 35 | 45 | -0.1 | 1.07 |
| 11 | 20 | Civic education can be implemented via General Studies because there is a substantive amount of civic learning elements in the existing General Studies curriculum. | 0 | 50 | -0.21 | 0.85 |

Reliability Coefficients $\alpha = 0.8027$

a. Implementing civic education via the General Studies curriculum

The results showed that teachers in the pilot school were doubtful about the role of General Studies as the major vehicle for implementing civic education in the primary curriculum. They were not satisfied with the content of the GS curriculum. The mean score of Q11, "Civic education can be implemented via the General Studies because there is a substantive amount of civic learning elements in the existing General Studies curriculum" was -0.21 . It implied that a majority of respondents opined that the subject content was thin in the area of civic education. Most of them also disagreed that there was adequate curriculum space for implementing a participatory and child-centred civic education programme in primary schools. Q5, "There is adequate curriculum space in the Hong Kong primary school curriculum for implementing a participatory and child-centred civic education programme" had a mean score of -0.1 . This reflected clearly that teachers were aware of the tight and congested primary curriculum which was unfavourable to the adoption of a participatory and child-centred approach to civic education, an approach which was fundamental to the preparation of active citizens. It further helped us understand the difficulties in implementing civic education through the formal curriculum.

b. A weak consensus on the development and implementation of civic education

There were six items which had mean scores of less than 0.7. They were Q19: "The HKSAR primary schools should model themselves on counterparts in the mainland in introducing ethics and character education in the formal curriculum" (0.5), Q8: "As a General Studies teacher, I can help my students develop good understanding of China because I know my country well" (0.55), Q6: "My school has been actively promoting pupils' understanding and concern for their mother country, the PRC (0.6), Q10: "To develop a critical understanding of China among primary students is more important than to foster an unconditional love of the Chinese nation in the HKSAR" (0.6), Q12: "Pupils should be taught the major developments accomplished by the PRC since 1949 to help to maintain among themselves a positive image of their home country" (0.6) and Q9: "My school can provide a variety of learning experience to help students identify with their nation" (0.65). The results revealed that on the whole, there was no clear consensus among teachers in this school on the model, objectives, content, teaching strategies and learning outcomes of civic education. Their responses to these items further confirmed the observation that some teachers were less confident that GS could play its role as a major vehicle for civic education focusing

on the development of children's sense of national identity in primary schools.

c. Influence of the Chinese and Western views on civic education

Teachers seemed to agree more on two items in the survey. They were Q3, "Civic education should stress developing students' independent and critical thinking" and Q16, "The study of major controversial issues in the HKSAR is conducive to the development of pupils' identification with both the local and national community".

The mean scores for these two items were 1.2 and 1.1 respectively. The positive responses to the items showed that teachers had been under the influence of the West in approving of an emphasis on independent and critical thinking and the examination of controversial issues. On the other hand, the high mean rating on Q13: "Patriotism should be indoctrinated to help to foster pupils' sense of national identity" also revealed that the influence of the Chinese conception of civic education had not been weakened.. This suggested a need for teachers to clarify their thinking and perceptions on the models, goals and rationales of civic education and the strategies to be adopted in the preparation of our young citizens.

d. Convergence in views on the study of local community but divergence on the study of the national community

Analysis of responses showed that there was a higher degree of agreement among teachers on civic learning related to the local community. For example, 85% either agreed or strongly agreed that participation in community affairs is an effective way of promoting pupils' sense of national identity (Q2), 90% either agreed or strongly agreed that study of major controversial social issues in the HKSAR is conducive to the development of pupils' identification with both the local and national community (Q16). But teachers were more diverse in their views about civic learning related to the national community. For instance, the cumulative percentage for choosing "agree" and "strongly agree" for items such as, Q10: "To develop a critical understanding of China among primary students is more important than to foster an unconditional love of the Chinese nation in the HKSAR"; Q12: "Pupils should be taught the major developments accomplished by the PRC since 1949 to maintain among themselves a positive image of their home country"; and Q14: "Primary pupils should be given the opportunities to investigate controversial issues related to contemporary China, such as the June Fourth Incident, the Cultural Revolution, the Independence of Taiwan,

etc” fell to 50%, 65% and 70% respectively. On the whole, there were very few respondents disagreeing with these items. Those who did not agree or strongly agree with these items were neutral in their view. It shows that they felt uncertain on these issues rather than having a dislike of these practices.

The above analysis shows that General Studies teachers in the pilot school were more divergent in their perceptions and views on the development and implementation of civic education than the small group of participant teachers. But they also shared most of the views and concerns of participant teachers in promoting civic education via the General Studies curriculum. The major difference between the findings of the interviews with the participant teachers and the survey of all General Studies teacher was that the latter had a more cautious view on the role of General Studies as a major vehicle for promoting civic education. General Studies teachers on the whole also placed a high value on independent and critical thinking, which are essential ingredients of the Western conception of citizenship. The findings further substantiated the worries and uncertainties faced by teachers in teaching issues related to the national community.

Observations by the researcher during the preparatory meetings

Preparation began in mid-May 2000. Regular preparatory meetings were convened by the researcher with the group of participant teachers in the pilot school. Meetings were usually held once every month but additional meetings were convened nearer to the trial period which was scheduled for November and December. The researcher also played the role of an adviser in these meetings. Given the setting and the structure of the meeting, the latter was perceived as an important role by teachers. As explained in Chapter V, most of the field notes were made in retrospect after the meetings. They were brief accounts of highly selected observations of significant incidents identified by the researcher in the meetings. The notes were studied for the first time by the researcher to identify any themes emerging from them. Codes were assigned to these themes. The notes were studied the second time to confirm these themes and to explore whether there were other themes which might have been overlooked in the first reading. Additional codes were created for the new themes. The notes were then analysed based on the coding system developed in the first and second readings. A summary of the themes as observed in the preparatory meetings is provided below.

1. Confusion and problems in the selection of content

Teachers' major concern in developing the study unit was the selection of content.

In the first meeting with the group of teachers, a common question raised by the participant teachers was "What should be included in the study unit?" As the unit theme and three sub-themes were given, the team had to spend a considerable amount of time to make sense of the theme and the three sub-themes so that they knew what to put in the various sub-themes. But in the discussions on the selection of content for the sub-themes, the researcher observed that the teachers did not pay much attention to the objectives of the study unit. Though the participant teachers had a rough idea of what the unit was aiming at, i.e. the development of children's sense of national identity, they were not sure what topics should be chosen to achieve the goal. They also did not attempt to clarify what national identity was. It seemed that they had an assumption that if pupils were given the chance to study topics related to China, their civic awareness and sense of belonging to the Chinese nation would automatically be enhanced.

There was an incident when teachers were probed to explain why children should

study the history of ancient China. The answer was that the study could help children develop a better understanding of China. Thus they would be able to identify with their mother country. When teachers were asked how the study of the teaching of Confucius could help to promote children's national sentiment, the standard answer provided above was mentioned again. As teachers, they were more concerned with the content of the study unit because they were responsible for delivering the curriculum. They were not ready to take up the role of curriculum developer. Consequently, it was not easy for them to ask "why" and "how" questions when they were taking part in the development of the curriculum. In the subsequent meetings, the researcher attempted to help them to consider the "why" question after making decisions on the "what" question by frequently referring to the objectives of the study unit. Teachers seemed to be convinced but the progress was slow.

Without a clear understanding of the aim of the study unit, teachers could only draw on their own perceptions of what children should learn in relation to the sub-theme when making content selection. Or simply because they did not have any idea about what to choose, they tried to look for teaching packages on related

topics and adapted these packages in the content selection. The basic problem was that the sub-themes were quite extensive in scope. As a result, they often included more than children could learn within the limited curriculum time. For instance, in the sub-theme, Confucius, a lot of Confucius's sayings were included. Some of them were beyond children's ability to understand and some of them were distant from their daily experience. In another subtopic, the Great Wall, the teacher-in-charge tried to provide a complete overview of the ancient history and the geographical setting of China to the Primary 5 children within the five periods allocated to this subtopic. As a result, a lot of information and historical facts were included in this part of the curriculum. Some of them even overlapped with the subtopics of the sub-theme, Yangtze River. The researcher had to remind the teachers of the aim of the study unit and encourage them to develop different selection criteria for structuring the content of the sub-themes. Table 6.3 shows the list of topics in the three sub-themes in the initial unit plan.

Table 6.3: Topics in the three sub-themes of “The Best of China”

| Sub-theme | Topics |
|-------------------|--|
| The Great Wall | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Home of the Dragon – the Geography of China• Finding the Root – the Development of the Chinese Nation• The Magnificent Building – the Great Wall• The Composition of the Chinese Nation• Building a Harmonious Relationship within our National Family• Climbing the Great Wall – Building our National Spirit• The Symbolic Value of the Great Wall |
| The Yangtze River | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Longest River – the Yangtze River Basin and its Natural Resources• The Cities of the Yangtze River• The Three Gorges Project• Travelling along the Yangtze River |
| Confucius | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Story of Confucius• The Teaching of Confucius• Contributions of Confucius |

2. Clear division of labour but limited collaboration in the development of the school-based civic education project

There seemed to be a very clear division of labour among the participant teachers in this group. Among them, three teachers were responsible for developing the content of the three sub-themes. One teacher was in charge of developing the resources, particularly the IT resources for supporting the teaching of the different topics in the theme. However, there seemed to be very little collaboration and teamwork among them. Each participant teacher worked independently on the sub-theme that they were responsible for. They planned, designed and developed the content of the sub-theme individually. The subject head could only make use of the team meetings to provide some monitoring and supervision of the work of individual teachers and encourage collaboration among team members. Except for the first two meetings, the main agenda item for each meeting was the presentation and discussion of the content topics of one of the sub-themes developed by the participant teachers. But teachers' participation in the discussions was usually minimal. Other than the presenter who was given the responsibility to introduce the content materials to be included in the sub-theme

and the strategies to be employed for teaching the content, members in the group usually talked quite little in the meetings. The discussions usually developed into a dialogue between the teacher-in-charge of that particular sub-theme and the researcher. This indicated that on the one hand, they were inexperienced in curriculum development and did not have the confidence to comment on the selection of content and strategies made by peers. On the other hand, it also showed that teachers were still not used to working in collaboration with peers in lesson preparation. They also tended to rely heavily on the advice of the researcher. They were inclined to wait and let the researcher make the decision for them on matters related to the development of the teaching package. They usually adopted all the suggestions made by the researcher. The researcher recognized that this created a problem. A school-based project without the active participation of the teachers would be meaningless. It would be self-defeating and would be unlikely achieve its objectives, the enhancement of teachers' professional development and the development of a curriculum which would cater for the needs of the pupils. In his later encounters with the participant teachers, the researcher tried to keep to his facilitator's role as far as possible. When he had to give advice, either because the discussion came to a deadlock or because of the

time constraint, he would still ask the teacher to explain whether things should be decided in this way, based on their understanding of the General Studies curriculum or the cognitive development of pupils. It was hoped that through such expanded dialogues with teachers, a more participative climate could be maintained in the meetings and participant teachers could develop their confidence in voicing their opinions and ideas on the development of the project. The strategy achieved limited success. With the limited time for the meeting sessions (usually the meetings were held after school) and the very tight time line for the development and preparation of the initial plan and teaching package for the trial stage, the researcher could not insist on playing the role of the facilitator only and was under pressure to give advice in a more direct manner.

3. Problems in relating theory and practice in the instructional design of the project

Participant teachers had attended a series of workshops on teaching approaches and had grasped some jargon, such as child-centred approach, participatory approach, reflective inquiry, problem-solving, issue-based approach, etc. They

used this jargon in the discussion of the strategies to be employed in the various topics. They also tried to apply these approaches in the instructional design of the study unit and attempted to design a wide variety of learning activities to enhance learning, such as PowerPoint presentations, role playing, case studies, group work, singing of songs and web-based learning and so on. However, the researcher observed that they did not have a thorough understanding of these concepts. Consequently they had difficulties in translating them into effective classroom practice. In planning for a topic on Confucius, the teacher suggested adopting an inquiry approach in exploring the great contributions of Confucius to the Chinese culture. She proposed to provide a list of selected works of Confucius for pupils to discuss and examine in groups. Pupils were asked to classify them according to categories given by the teacher. The works of Confucius were written on word cards so that the pupils could paste them in the appropriate column on the white board after discussion. But the problem was that much of the work listed was unfamiliar to pupils and had not been introduced in the previous lessons. The researcher asked how pupils could engage in a meaningful discussion of the importance of these works and classify them using the categories given by the teacher, without a clearer understanding of some of these works. He suggested

that the learning activity might not enhance pupils' inquiry skills. They would not be analyzing the different accomplishments of Confucius but making a guess on which column the word cards should be placed in. The teacher in charge of the sub-theme noted the problem and suggested providing a brief explanation before the group work.

In the preparatory meetings, it was also found that teachers had difficulty in enhancing pupils' learning in the affective domain. In the sub-theme, the Great Wall, an activity was designed to introduce pupils to the life of ancient Chinese, aiming at inculcating among them a positive view towards the Chinese nation. As in many of the learning activities designed to foster positive attitudes among pupils, there was too much emphasis on the cognitive aspect. The affective aspect was almost always neglected. It was hard to generate any emotional ties between the pupils and the ancient people of China. As a result, it was difficult to promote their self-identification as members of the Chinese nation. To give due emphasis to the affective domain, the singing of songs related to the Great Wall and the Chinese nation was introduced in this sub-theme after lengthy discussion of the content selection and teaching approaches. It was hoped that children could

develop a close feeling with the Chinese nation through these activities.

The neglect of the affective domain has been a common phenomenon in the formal school curriculum in Hong Kong. It might be attributed to the examination-oriented education system in the territory. The development of attitudes and values was rarely a priority and could hardly be tested objectively in the examinations. Hence, to help pupils pass the examinations, teachers focused on teaching the cognitive elements in all the subjects. With little understanding of the approaches to teaching values and attitudes, and with little experience in promoting values learning, participant teachers tended to avoid teaching values and attitudes in the unit.

4. Development of teaching and learning resources

There was extensive use of IT in the design of learning activities. Three of the teachers were enthusiastic about incorporating IT into the teaching and learning of the study unit. PowerPoint presentation was the most common activity designed for the various topics in the three sub-themes. The teacher in charge of the

sub-theme on the Yangtze River even developed teacher-made software for investigating the main features of the big cities along the Yangtze River. Emphasis on IT enabled the use of multi-media resources in class. Charts, pictures, maps and graphs could be presented easily through the PowerPoint presentations. But there was always the problem of selection of resources and securing the copyright for the use of these resources. The group found that it was very expensive to buy the copyright for using pictures from commercial media enterprises. This could constitute a big issue in the development of a school-based curriculum.

Conclusion

Results of the interviews with the head teacher and the participant teachers showed that there was a bias towards the Chinese conception of citizenship and civic education in the development of the school-based civic education project in the pilot school. They emphasized the development of “useful and civilized” citizens and the interest of the collective. Both the head teacher and the participant teachers agreed that the school had a mission to produce loyal and committed citizens for the national community though some teachers had problems in identifying with the PRC themselves. The questionnaire survey

with all the General Studies teachers in the pilot school also confirmed the interview results that the head teacher as well as the teachers in the pilot school were also aware of the western views on citizenship and civic education. They could incorporate some ideas from the West in developing their civic education curriculum but in a casual and inconsistent manner. The observations by the researcher in the preparatory meetings showed that teachers were not experienced in school-based curriculum development and civic education. They had difficulties in deciding on the focus of the study unit, in selecting curriculum materials and pedagogical approaches. Consequently, the initial plan included too many content items in the three sub-themes. Some of them were also too difficult for P.5 pupils. A variety of learning activities were designed but values learning was not given adequate attention in the plan. The next chapter will investigate the implementation of this school-based civic education project. It helps to provide more information on the development of the project and identify major problems and issues in the “process” of its development.

Chapter VII

Results II

The Implementation of the School-based Civic Education Project

The focus of this chapter is on how the school-based General Studies unit was implemented in the pilot school. Implementation is usually referred to as the “process” in “the presage, context, process and product continuum” developed by Gage (1978). It is hard to define and draw a clear boundary on the “process”. Yet it is more difficult to study the “process” because it is ever-developing.

To investigate the process of implementation of the project, this study focused on examining the teaching and learning process as manifested and unfolded in the different trial lessons conducted by the participant teachers. With their consent, the researcher observed 16 trial lessons. To further understand the teaching and learning process, follow-up interviews were conducted with teachers as soon as possible after observing the lessons. Because of the very tight teaching and learning schedule in the pilot school and the heavy workload participant teachers had to take up everyday in school, it was

extremely difficult to arrange time for interviews. The interview time varied greatly. The duration of the face-to-face interviews with teachers ranged from 13 minutes to over an hour. All lesson observations and interviews were taped and the electronic records were transcribed into text for analysis.

As explained in Chapter V, this study made reference to the “action-based framework for the analysis of teaching” developed by Alexander (2000, p.325) in analysing the observed trial lessons. The lesson was the basic unit of observation. Within the 30-minute period, the “core acts of teaching”, namely “task, activity, interaction and judgement” (Alexander, 2000, p.325) were identified. The frame for these “core acts” which included, the sub-theme and the topic of the lesson, the venue, pupil organization and time, was also specified. Tables 7.1 to 7.3 summarize the results of the observation of selected lessons from the three sub-themes. The finding helped to further our understanding of the interaction of the presage, context and process factors in school-based curriculum development. The follow-up interviews with the participant teachers, on the other hand, provided rich information on the intention and perceptions of the teachers participating in the teaching process. They helped to supplement the findings of the lesson studies and facilitate the continuous development of the school-based civic education project. In fact,

Table 7.1: Summary of results of lesson observation on Theme 1: The Great Wall

| Theme / Sub-theme | Lesson Topic | Teacher | Date & Venue | Activities | Organization | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | | Time | Pupils | Resources |
| The Home of the Dragon – the Geography of China | L1: The Geography of China I | Subject Head | 31-10-00 Computer Laboratory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Presentation | 27' | Pupils sat in rows in the laboratory | Two pupils sharing a computer |
| | L2: The Geography of China II | Subject Head | 1-11-00 Computer Laboratory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher talk Individual seat work Teacher talk Pair work on software programme | 4' 3' 6' 14' | Pupils sat in rows in the laboratory | Two pupils sharing a computer |
| Finding our Roots – the Development of the Chinese Nation | L3: Finding our Roots | Subject Head | 6-11-00 Art Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint presentation Group discussion Reporting of results of discussion PowerPoint presentation | 7' 2' 4' 10' | Pupils sat in groups of 6 to 7 | Rectangular tables for group work |
| | L4: The Ancient History of China | Subject Head | 7-11-00 Art Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint presentation | 28' | Pupils sat in groups of 6 to 7 | Rectangular tables for group work |
| | L5: Finding our Roots | Experienced teacher | 8-11-00 Computer Laboratory | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint presentation | 25' | Pupils sat in rows in the laboratory | Two pupils sharing a computer |
| Building a Harmonious Relationship within our National Family | L6: United under the Chinese Nation | Subject Head | 8-11-00 Art Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Presentation Listening to song, the Great Wall PowerPoint Presentation Group discussion Reporting of discussion results PowerPoint Presentation Singing of song, the Great Wall | 4' 4' 5' 4' 4' 5' 4' | Pupils sat in groups of 6 to 7 | Rectangular tables for group work |

Table 7.2: Summary of results of lesson observation on Theme 2: The Yangtze River

| Sub-theme | Lesson Topic | Teacher | Date & Venue | Activities | Organization | | |
|---|--|---------------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | Time | Pupils | Resources |
| The Longest River – the Yangtze River Basin and its Natural Resources | L7: The Geography of the Yangtze Basin | Young Teacher | 2-11-00 Hall | • PowerPoint presentation | 25' | All P.5 pupils sat in rows in the Hall | Worksheets for recording information |
| | L8: The Natural Resources of the Yangtze Basin | Young Teacher | 9-11-00 Art Room | • PowerPoint presentation • Group work • Reporting of group findings • PowerPoint Presentation • Computer game | 7' 8' 7' 7' 3' | Pupils sat in groups of 6 to 7 | Rectangular tables for group works |
| | L9: The Natural Resources of the Yangtze Basin | Subject Head | 20-11-00 Art Room | • PowerPoint presentation • Group work and mapping of resources on the wall map • PowerPoint presentation | 6' 16' 7' | Pupils sat in groups of 6 to 7 | Rectangular tables for group work |
| The Cities of the Yangtze River | L10: Big Cities along the Yangtze Basin | Young Teacher | 7-11-00 Computer Laboratory | • PowerPoint presentation • Pair work on teacher-made software programme • Completing a summary table by selected pupils on the whiteboard • Teacher talk | 10' 15' 5' 5' | Pupils sat in rows in the laboratory | Two pupils sharing a computer |
| | L11: Big Cities along the Yangtze Basin | Experienced teacher | 20-11-00 Computer Laboratory | • PowerPoint Presentation | 25' | Pupils sat in rows in the laboratory | Pupils denied access to computers in front of them |
| | L12: Big Cities along the Yangtze Basin | Subject Head | 21-11-00 Computer Laboratory | • PowerPoint presentation • Pair work on teacher-made software programme | 8' 17' | Pupils sat in rows in the laboratory | Two pupils sharing a computer |

Table 7.3: Summary of results of lesson observation on Theme 3: Confucius

| Sub-theme | Lesson Topic | Teacher | Date & Venue | Activities | Organization | | |
|----------------------------|--|----------------|---------------------|---|--------------|---|---|
| | | | | | Time | Pupils | Resources |
| The Story of Confucius | L13: Confucius – Our Greatest Educator | Senior Teacher | 18-11-00 Hall | • Teacher talk | 6' | All P.4 to 6 pupils sat in rows in the Hall | Role play performed by pupils on stage to tell the stories of Confucius |
| | | | | • Role play (Performed on stage) | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Teacher talk | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Role play (Performed on stage) | 2' | | |
| | | | | • Teacher talk | 4' | | |
| | | | | • PowerPoint Presentation | 11' | | |
| The Teaching of Confucius | L14: How can one be a moral person? | Senior Teacher | 20-11-00 Class-room | • Teacher talk | 10' | Pupils sat in rows in the classroom | Seats arranged in rows. |
| | | | | • Group discussion | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Role play | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Group discussion | 4' | | |
| | | | | • Matching of pictures with Confucius's sayings | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Teacher talk | 5' | | |
| | L15: How did Confucius teach his students? | Senior Teacher | 21-11-00 Class-room | • Teacher talk | 15' | Pupils sat in rows in the classroom. | Seats arranged in rows. |
| | | | | • Role playing | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Whole class discussion | 5' | | |
| | | | | • Listening to Story | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Whole class discussion | 5' | | |
| | | | | • Listening to Confucius teaching | 2' | | |
| Contributions of Confucius | L16: Confucius's contribution to the Chinese culture | Senior Teacher | 22-11-00 Art Room | • Teacher talk | 6' | Pupils sat in groups of 6 to 7. | Rectangular tables for group work |
| | | | | • Listening to story | 3' | | |
| | | | | • Teacher talk | 8' | | |
| | | | | • Group work | 5' | | |
| | | | | • Teacher summarized group findings on whiteboard | 6' | | |
| | | | | • PowerPoint presentation | 3' | | |

the interviews and meetings with participant teachers served as a platform for exchange of ideas and opinions among participant teachers and the researcher, and helped to sustain the development of the action research.

Issues arising from lesson observation

1. The heavy emphasis on the transmission of factual knowledge

There was a bias towards the imparting of knowledge in the observed lessons.

Participant teachers tried to familiarize pupils with knowledge of China by providing them with a large amount of information on the geography of China, the geography and natural resources of the Yangtze River Basin, the history of Ancient China and the Great Wall, and the teaching and contributions of Confucius to the Chinese culture.

Each of the above-mentioned topics was huge but only one to three 30-minute lessons were allocated to teaching of the topic content. As a result, most of the lessons observed were expository in nature. Direct instruction was the dominant mode of teaching. In five of the lessons observed (L1, L4, L5, L7 and L11), teachers just talked through the whole lesson with the aid of PowerPoint presentations. Though the lessons exhibited the common three-stage lesson structure comprising an introduction,

a development and a concluding stage, it was not uncommon to find that the last stage was omitted due to insufficient time for the presentation of facts in the development stage. Examples could be found in lessons L1, L3, L4 and L5 observed in the sub-theme, the Great Wall and lesson L6, L11 and L12 in the sub-theme, the Yangtze River Basin. The development stage in most lessons observed in the second sub-theme was also characterized by having only a unitary teaching task emphasizing rote learning. Lessons of the third sub-theme, Confucius, displayed a more diverse structure and allowed the adoption of a more participatory approach.

The heavy emphasis on the transmission of factual knowledge was evident in the manner in which different learning activities were conducted in class. A typical example was a web-based learning activity designed for the topic, Major Cities along the Yangtze River. Sitting in the computer room, pupils worked in pairs to view and extract information from a teacher-made software programme. Worksheets were also developed to guide pupils to note down the information on the different cities. After completing the worksheets, selected pupils were called upon to work on the whiteboard to identify the labels with the correct information of the cities and to paste them in the different columns of a chart drawn on the whiteboard. There was no need for pupils to do any analysis or even to show comprehension of the data. Pupils were

only required to copy the verbal information directly from the software programme to the worksheet and identify the labels with similar information to be placed in the different boxes in the chart. This task required a low level of cognitive thinking or simply recalling of facts.

2. Lack of attention to the development of attitudes and values

Observation of the trial lessons confirmed that the development of attitudes and values was to a large extent neglected in the implementation of the project. Despite the fact that one of the objectives for developing this school-based civic education project was to foster a sense of national identity among children, and there had been lengthy discussions, facilitated by the researcher, on the development of children's attitudes towards their mother country in the preparatory meetings, most participant teachers paid little attention to promoting pupils' values and attitudes towards China in the trial lessons. A variety of learning activities were designed for the study of the teaching of Confucius. Yet, the emphasis was more on the development of understanding of the teaching of Confucius rather than on fostering the values and attitudes advocated by him. For instance, role playing and story telling were used by the teacher to introduce to pupils Confucius' ideas on education, to cater for

individual needs and to teach everyone irrespective of their background. But pupils were not provided with opportunities to discuss and reflect on the value of these ideas and their relevance to their daily living. After telling stories on how Confucius put his ideas into practice, the teacher asked pupils to read aloud in chorus the major contributions of Confucius as presented in the slides. The method of teaching was not conducive to the development of attitudes and values. Pupils are unlikely to identify with their culture, let alone their mother country, by just memorizing the facts about an educator with whom they are not familiar.

In one of the lessons in the sub-theme, the Yangtze River, teachers decided to conduct debate to facilitate the development of pupils' attitudes towards the building of The Three-Gorges Dam. Detailed procedures were also agreed upon for the implementation of the activity. But in the trial lesson, the activity was dropped. Instead, teachers only presented information for and against the building of the dam through PowerPoint presentation. The brief introduction could provide pupils with a general understanding of the hydro-electric power plant. It did not seem to help pupils develop their own judgements on the building of the power plant.

Based on the researcher's observations of the trial lessons, the teaching of values and

attitudes were mainly to be “caught” rather than taught in this study unit. For instance, in the lessons on the sub-theme, the Great wall, the subject head tried to model the aspirations of a committed loyal Chinese national by using the pronouns “we” and “us” when he referred to the Chinese nation, and the possessive pronoun, “our” when he talked about things of China to indicate his close relationship with the state, the PRC. He tried to make use of the hidden curriculum to foster pupils’ sense of national identity. But this practice was not common among the participant teachers. Two teachers still used a very neutral tone in introducing China to the P.5 pupils. They presented the topic content in an objective manner, without attaching any emotion or particular values to their teaching. The inconsistency in the manner teachers presented the content could not have helped the development of a hidden curriculum which was conducive to the fostering of pupils’ identification with their mother country, the PRC.

Observations of trial lessons showed that the neglect of this important domain of learning was largely due to the lack of understanding and experience among the participant teachers in values teaching. For instance, an activity was designed in the sub-theme, the Great Wall in the initial unit plan to help pupils relate the HKSAR to their mother country by asking them to search for names of the streets and foods in the territory which were borrowed from the different cities and regions in Mainland

China. It aimed to remind pupils of the close relationship between the territory and the Mainland and to foster a feeling of intimacy among pupils when thinking about China, which had been so distant from them previously. But in the lesson, it was observed that the teacher failed to arouse such feeling. Realizing that pupils had difficulties in providing names of streets and foods which had their origins in Mainland China, the teacher simply supplied some of the names; without helping pupils draw any meaning from the learning experience, he proceeded with the next activity. Again the participant teacher was more concerned with the transmission of facts than the development of values and attitudes in his teaching.

Primary teachers should not have been unfamiliar with the teaching of values and attitudes as it had been an integral part of the basic education curriculum since 1970s. The Primary Social Studies syllabus, which was revised in 1979, placed strong emphasis on the development of attitudes and values (Curriculum Development Committee, 1980). The “integrated” subject, General Studies, which was implemented in 1996 and revised in 2002, further stressed the importance of learning of attitudes and values through the study of a wide range of themes in the curriculum. With a new strand of learning established for reinforcing the study of the Chinese culture and the national identity, the emphasis on values learning was strengthened.

However, there is a long tradition in Hong Kong primary schools of paying only lip service to the teaching of values in the various subjects. With little experience in teaching the affective domain, the participant teachers lacked the necessary skills and understanding in fostering children's national consciousness and identity, which is essentially values learning. Their training in the workshops and seminars provided by the QEF project team seemed to be insufficient. It needed to be supplemented with concrete experience for translating the teaching approaches into learning activities to be conducted in the actual classroom context. An experiential learning approach (Kolb, 1984) would probably have been more effective in the development of tacit knowledge and skills. Teachers' participation in the development of the school-based project might have been valuable to them in consolidating their learning in the workshops. But it would have to take a longer time to see the learning outcomes.

3. Use of a variety of learning activities to enhance learning

Analysis of the observed lessons showed that a variety of learning activities were conducted but PowerPoint presentation was the predominant mode of teaching in the trial lessons. In the 16 observed lessons, only two lessons on Confucius, were taught with no PowerPoint presentation. Through PowerPoint presentations, a large amount

of information in different formats could be provided. Teachers could also employ multi-media to present the information and ideas of the lessons. However, teachers were not able to fully utilize IT to create and support a rich and interactive learning environment for pupils. With a major concern for imparting information, a computer-based inquiry activity designed for investigating the cities along the Yangtze River was degraded into a comprehension exercise. Information and thinking skills were largely unable to develop through the activity.

Other learning activities conducted in the trial lessons included role playing, listening to stories, singing songs, group discussions, whole class discussion and computer games. However, the use of these activities was confined to some lessons only. They were used infrequently, of short duration, and sometimes implemented without a clear purpose and in an episodic manner. For instance, the group discussions conducted in lessons on the sub-theme, the Great Wall, only lasted for 4 to 6 minutes. They served as breaks in the middle of the long PowerPoint presentations. Pupils were given one to two questions and worked in groups to suggest answers to the questions. They could only brainstorm answers to the questions provided and did not have sufficient time to interact and exchange views with their peers. The reporting of the group discussion results was also brief. The teacher did not build on the discussion results

to further pupils' understanding of the significance of the Great Wall to the Chinese nation but moved on to another point in the lesson.

Generally speaking, reporting of the results of the group discussions was not common.

Pupils were not provided with opportunities to share their views with other groups in class after the group discussions. The pattern of the activities of role play and

listening to stories about Confucius was similar to that of group discussions. They

were episodic and of very short in duration. They lasted for 2 to 3 minutes and were

used to present ideas advocated by Confucius rather than to illustrate the process of

the development of events or to provide opportunities for examination of

controversial issues. Ideas presented included filial piety, catering for individual

differences, and teaching everyone irrespective of their talent and social background.

Only one role play conducted in the observed lessons had follow-up discussion. The

teacher just summarized the ideas presented in the role plays. Pupils were not given

opportunities to further examine the ideas and reflect on the learning experience they

had just gone through. This was not conducive to the development of understanding

and positive attitudes towards the Chinese nation. There was more collaborative work

provided to pupils in lessons on the Yangtze River Basin. Group and pair work was

also usually followed by reporting or presentation of group findings. But pupils were

in general not skilful in presenting and reporting to the whole class.

On the whole, teachers were not competent in helping children conceptualize and reflect on their learning experience. However, the use of a variety of activities did, to a certain extent, encourage more pupil participation and promote collaboration among them. They helped to expand and extend pupils' learning experience by employing different ways of grouping children, organizing the teaching and learning resources, the time on task and the learning environment. Children studied individually, in groups and with the whole class. More diverse and innovative teaching resources were used, such as IT and a more diversified learning process was provided which took place in different contexts, such as the art room, the computer room and even in the hall.

4. Low level of pupil participation and interaction between teachers and pupils

Other than examining how the study unit was taught by participant teachers, it was equally important to investigate how pupils learned in the lessons. Based on a constructivist view of learning, this action research identified six types of activities which involved different levels of pupil participation in the learning process. They

helped to illustrate how pupils participated in class and interacted with the teacher, their peers and the environment in different contexts. These activities ranged from answering teachers' questions either individually or in chorus to collaborative group or pair work which required active involvement of the whole person and interaction with peers. On the whole, it was observed that pupils' participation in the learning process was low level in terms of frequency and time duration. Table 7.4 shows the different modes of pupil participation and their frequency as observed by the researcher in the 16 lessons.

A common mode of pupil participation in the trial lessons was answering questions. It appeared in almost every lesson. It was absent in lesson 13 because this session was an assembly conducted in the hall for all upper primary classes. In most of the trial lessons, pupils listened to teacher's talk or PowerPoint presentations passively and answered questions infrequently. Except in four lessons (L2, L7, L14 and L15), pupils answered less than 10 questions in a 30-minute lesson. Their answers were characterized by incomplete sentence structure. To answer teachers' questions, they usually uttered a few syllabi or words in chorus or individually. The researcher observed that the prevalence of this pattern of exchange between pupils and teachers was mainly the result of teachers' questioning methods and skills. Except the senior

Table 7.4: Modes and intensity of pupil participation in the 16 observed lessons

conducted.

| Mode of Participation | Trial Lessons Observed by Researcher | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|----------|---------|
| | The Great Wall | | | | | | The Yangtze River Basin | | | | | | Confucius | | | |
| | L1 | L2 | L3 | L4 | L5 | L6 | L7 | L8 | L9 | L10 | L11 | L12 | L13 | L14 | L15 | L16 |
| Answer questions | 9 times | 13 times | 6 times | 7 times | 3 times | 2 times | 10 times | 6 times | 3 times | 5 times | 1 time | 8 times | Nil | 12 times | 41 times | 8 times |
| Collaborate (group) | Nil | Nil | 6' | Nil | Nil | 4' | Nil | 8' | 12' | Nil | Nil | Nil | *5' | 13' | 3' | 5' |
| Collaborate (pair) | Nil | 14' | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | 15' | Nil | 17' | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Report to the class | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | 4' | Nil | 7' | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Singing of song | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | 8' | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Work at black/white board | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | 4' | 5' | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | 5' |

* 2 selected groups of pupils did role play on stage to help present the story of

Confucius.

teacher, all participant teachers only occasionally posed questions to their pupils during their presentations. Questions were mostly closed questions, mainly concerned with the recalling and at most the comprehension of factual information. They aimed at focusing pupils' attention and monitoring their learning rather than facilitating them to think about and conceptualize their learning experiences. For instance, when the

teacher was showing a picture about Shanghai's food, he asked, "What are the people eating?" Sometimes, even teachers' questions were presented in incomplete sentence. Pupils were expected to fill in the blanks provided by teachers. A typical example would be:

Teacher: What are the Chinese people often being described as?"

Pupils (in chorus): The descendants of the Dragon.

This pattern of questions and answers might adversely affect a major purpose of teaching and learning, the exchange of meaning between teachers and pupils (Alexander, 2000). It also encouraged the repetition of verbatim information by pupils. It was likely severely to restrict opportunities for higher order thinking and result in surface learning of factual knowledge. It had serious implications for children's values learning because they would have to be able to make sense of their learning experience in the various topics before they could develop their own attitudes and values on these topics. Even in L15 where there was high frequency of pupil response to teacher's questions, pupils could not go beyond the pattern of giving very short answers. In the lesson, the researcher observed that the teacher asked a lot of "what" questions and most of the questions were closed. They could not provoke thinking or

enhance children's learning. The teacher was also often too eager to supplement the answers given by the pupils.

An exchange between teacher and pupils in this lesson is provided below to illustrate how pupils participated and interacted with the teacher in the learning process. It also shows clearly how teachers' questioning methods and skills restricted children's expression, thinking and their construction of meaning from their learning experience.

After role playing the story of Confucius in accepting all those who came to apply to be his students, the teacher began asking pupils about the content of the story.

Teacher: Now I would like to ask you questions about the story of Confucius. The first student who came to ask Confucius to accept him to be his student is Man Yee Tze. Why did he want to be Confucius' student?

Pupil: Because he didn't know the rites and rituals.

Teacher: Good. It was because he knew little about rites and rituals. Knowing the rites and rituals was important for an official in

the past. They should have good knowledge in this area when they were in the court. Forgetting about them would constitute a very serious mistake. Man's father embarrassed himself for not knowing the rites and ritual when he served as an official. Man was aware of the importance of them. Hence he wanted to learn from Confucius.

Teacher: What did the second student want to learn from Confucius?

(Few pupils raised their hands.) Who could hear clearly about the story?

Teacher: He wanted to learn about the basic principles for going along with others.

What did the third student say to Confucius?

Pupil: Very poor, with no money.

Teacher: He was very poor, with no money. But what did he want to learn from Confucius?

Pupil: Rites and rituals, music, shooting, riding, language and mathematics.

Teacher: Yes, to learn rites and rituals, music, shooting, riding, language and mathematics, the Six Arts.

What about the fourth student? Had he been accepted by
Confucius?

Pupil: Had been accepted.

Teacher: What did the student ask Confucius to do?

Pupil: To reject the one waiting outside.

Teacher: Why? How was his personality?

Pupil: He had a weak personality, very bad.

Teacher: But did Confucius accept him to be one of his students?

Pupil: He did.

Teacher: What did Confucius demonstrate to us?

Pupils: To teach everyone irrespective of his background and social
class. (in chorus)

Teacher: How would you treat your peers? Would you be nicer to those
who are smart? How would you treat those who are stupid?
Would you teach them? Answer me aloud.

Pupils: Yes. (in chorus)

Teacher: All of you should model after Confucius though you are not
teachers. If your fellow pupils seek help from you....sometimes

I noticed that you were happy in sitting next to the clever pupils
but felt uneasy when you had to sit with those not as smart. If
you want to be like Confucius, we should help one another...

The above episode illustrates the pupils' passive participation. They did no more than responding to teacher's questions in the learning process. Their responses were short, based mainly on the information introduced by teachers earlier in the lesson, and did not have to go through careful thinking processes. They were standard answers supplied by pupils in chorus. Thus the question and answer in this lesson did not develop into a dialogue between the teacher and the pupils, nor among pupils. It was not conducive to the construction of meaning by pupils on their learning experience, or to the development of pupils' judgements and values on the topic of the lesson.

Similarly, as presented in the previous section, pupils' participation and interaction with peers in the group discussions, pair work, reporting activities and role playing were limited. They were constrained by the short time duration, and by having no follow-up work such as conceptualization and reflections, and the episodic nature of the activities. In some of the groups, some pupils just sat without doing anything throughout the group discussion sessions. The group work was done by only two to

three pupils. The unsatisfactory pupil participation was further reflected in pupils' reluctance in representing their groups to report to the class in two of the trial lessons. Most of the activities also required low cognitive input from pupils. Pupils did not have to do any analysis of data. Nor were they required to debate and argue with group members on controversial issues. As a result, their participation and interaction with peers in the learning activities were kept to a minimum level. This could hardly be advantageous to the development of pupils' understanding, skills, and attitudes and values.

There were some attempts to encourage participation and interaction. A variety of learning activities were designed and structured in a developmental manner aiming at fostering high order thinking in a few lessons. But when they were put into practice in the trial lessons, they deviated greatly from the original design. For instance, a group work design on the investigation of the natural resources along the Yangtze River Basin aiming at developing pupils' classification and map work skills had degraded into a competition for identifying the appropriate labels with the correct name of the natural resources written on them and pasting them onto the wall map. Paired work on a teacher-made interactive IT programme also became a comprehension exercise requiring pupils only to copy verbal information from the PowerPoint slides.

Results of Follow-Up Interviews with Participant Teachers

After observing each trial lesson, the researcher interviewed the participant teachers.

A total of 16 follow-up interviews were conducted. These interviews served two major purposes. First, they helped to gather teachers' views and perceptions of the implementation of the trial lessons and pupils' learning in these lessons. Second, they provided an effective channel for exchange of views between the researcher and the teachers on how the study unit could be further developed, as this is integral to an action research project.

This section summarizes the results of the 16 follow-up interviews. Analysis of the interview results followed the same procedures as described in the last chapter. The results helped to explain and substantiate the researcher's observations in the trial lessons. They also help to illustrate the role of the researcher in the development of the school-based civic education project.

1. The purpose of the lessons

In the interviews, a common response given by participant teachers to questions

on the purpose of their lessons was “to assist pupils to learn more about things of China”. But when they were requested to elaborate on what exactly they wanted to achieve in a particular lesson, they could only elicit the main points of the lessons. For instance, the senior teacher in charge of the sub-theme on Confucius responded, “I chose to teach about Confucius’ ideas, teachings and deeds. I reckon that through the study of this topic, they (the pupils) would know more about Confucius.” Similarly, the young teacher also stated that the study of the topics in the sub-theme, the Yangtze River, could enhance pupils’ understanding of the big cities and the natural resources along the river basin. To elucidate the significance of the lessons in relation to the goal of the study unit, teachers usually stressed that the lessons could help pupils develop “a better understanding of China”. They believed that with the acquisition of information about the “best” of their mother country, a more positive perception and an increased interest in the study of China could be achieved. As a result, pupils would be able to identify more with their mother country. It explains why the teaching of knowledge was given such a heavy emphasis in the trial lessons. Their emphasis on the cognitive to the neglect of the affective and social aspects in the trial teaching might also have represented a common reaction of the teachers on being asked to do something unfamiliar, in this case, the development of the school-based civic education project. They

tended to fall back for security on what was familiar to them, the teaching of knowledge, and to avoid what was unfamiliar, the development of attitudes and values.

2. The selection of content

In the interviews, it was found that teachers generally felt that too many content materials were included in the various topics. For instance, the subject head, who was in charge of designing the sub-theme, the Great Wall, told the researcher that compared with the original plan, there had been a drastic reduction of content in this sub-theme. Only 20% of the materials in the original plan were retained. Yet he recognized that there was still a need to cut the content after trying out the first topic though there was the danger of making the content too fragmentary.

Participant teachers did not express too much worry about the quantity of the content for the other two sub-themes. These sub-themes seemed to the teachers to be more focused.

Teachers also found that some of the topics in this study were too difficult for P.5 pupils. They reported that there were too many unfamiliar terms in the study of

the ancient history of China. The ideas and teachings of Confucius were also not easy for them to understand. As a result, there were very diverse opinions on the teaching of the topics of the sub-themes, the Great Wall and Confucius. Three of the participant teachers admitted that substantial adaptations had to be made to the initial scheme of work in conducting their trial lessons. They had simplified the content of the topics according to the abilities of their pupils and the time available for studying the different sub-themes for their classes.

Teachers tended to think that the teaching of the Yangtze River was quite straight forward because the study of this sub-theme involved only factual information about the five big cities and the natural resources along the river basin. But there was the problem of relevance in the selection of content, as pointed out by the participant teacher in charge of the development of this sub-theme. Pupils found that the Yangtze River was too distant from them, both physically and psychologically. Teachers had to be more careful in selecting content which could arouse pupils' interest.

The researcher observed that the problem in the selection of content was mainly attributed to the lack of a clear idea of the main focus of the study unit and how it

would be achieved among teachers. Consequently, they tended to stress the provision of factual information and include more than enough content items in the study unit. On the other hand, they also had a vague idea that the unit was concerned with the development of attitudes and values towards China. This posed another great problem for the participant teachers, i.e. should content which contained negative views or might arouse negative feelings towards China be introduced? There seemed to be a consensus among teachers that pupils should know about both the good and bad things of China. The young teacher was quite articulate in justifying why a balanced view should be provided. She said, "I think that pupils should be provided with all the information and let them develop their own view on China, whether good or bad. They should not be hypnotized by saying that China is perfect." The subject head, though he was supportive of the view that pupils should be fully informed of both the strengths and weaknesses of their mother country, was cautious in exposing pupils to the very diverse views on China. He was concerned that pupils might be more confused and could hardly develop a healthy attitude towards their own nation. Hence he tended to stress the teaching of the spectacular achievements of China so as to promote their civic awareness and their identification with China.

The problem of selection of content was difficult to resolve. “The Best of China” was a big topic, covering a lot of information. On the other hand, values cannot be developed in a vacuum. A knowledge base is needed for pupils to reflect, deliberate and construct their own meaning of their country. The *Guidelines* (CDC, 1996) has not provided teachers with any answers. It only maps out the content topics of civic education in the various subject areas. The *Guidelines* and probably *General Studies for Primary Schools Curriculum Guide: Primary One to Six* (CDC, 2002) may have under-estimated the amount of knowledge that pupils have to acquire before they can formulate their own attitudes and values towards themselves, society, the nation and the world. China has a long history, a vast territory, a huge population with many minorities, a rich culture, complex social, economic and political systems. It is indeed a great challenge for teachers to make the most appropriate choice of curriculum materials for enhancing pupils’ understanding and fostering children’s identification towards China. The researcher found that this question was a vital one and required more attention in this action research.

3. The selection and implementation of pedagogical approaches

In the interviews, participant teachers responded that they had tried hard to apply the approaches and strategies introduced in the training workshops to the teaching of the General Studies unit. There seemed to be a consensus that the didactic approach characterized by a textbook bound teaching method was no longer effective. They agreed that a more child-centred approach and participatory approach should be adopted in the design of learning activities but reckoned that not all the strategies introduced could be applied to the various topics in this unit. The participant teachers could seldom provide a clear explanation on their choice of teaching approaches in the interviews. The senior teacher described how she made her instructional decision. She said,

“The topic on Confucius is quite difficult for pupils to understand....To introduce the life history of Confucius is also quite boring. So I think why not ask pupils to role play some of the life events of Confucius, which include the time when he served as an official in his state, when he was the teacher, and when he was down.”

Three of the teachers were very experienced but they admitted that they were not familiar with the most up-to-date approaches and strategies. They had been trained 20 years ago or more and had not been retrained thereafter. They found that they lacked a repertoire of skills for conducting the learning activities following the design of the recommended approaches, especially group discussion.

Teachers seemed to be more interested in the discussion of the implementation of some learning activities. These activities included PowerPoint presentations, group discussions, singing songs and role playing. Teachers' perceptions and views on the implementation of these activities were as follows:

a. PowerPoint presentations

"More information could be presented and it could be presented in a more systematic manner." This was a common response from teachers in commenting on the use of PowerPoint in class. Other comments included,

"Using PowerPoint to present the content could be more effective in attracting pupils' attention."

"They (The pupils) took part actively in searching, viewing...the pictures, the

texts. They could learn more and memorize more information.”

“Because it is more interactive. With PowerPoint presentations, there are images to see and things to hear. Therefore it is more attractive to pupils. A great variety of resources can be incorporated into the PowerPoint and presented to pupils, even maps. The lively presentations will not be boring.

Pupils will learn more. Pupils can also control their own viewing in the second part of the lesson. It will be more interesting.”

Thus the major purpose of using IT was to arouse pupils’ interest in learning and to provide an environment which was rich in learning by incorporating a great variety of resources. But there was a hidden agenda in using IT as detected from what teachers said in the interviews. They aimed to acquaint themselves and the pupils with IT so that both parties could become more skilful users of IT.

All participant teachers revealed that they were not well supported in the use of IT in the trial lessons. There was a lack of ready-made educational software programmes. On the other hand, teachers were not provided with the necessary manpower to search for and develop IT resources. As pointed out by the senior teacher, “We, as teachers, don’t have that much time to adapt the materials for

teaching.” All of them responded that it would not be feasible for teachers to teach other General Studies units in this way.

With a major emphasis on the teaching of knowledge in this study unit, teachers were concerned that pupils might not be able to master the information delivered through the PowerPoint presentations. One of the teachers reported how she attempted to ensure that her pupils could acquire the information presented. She said, “Based on my experience in using PowerPoint presentation in the assembly hall, I started to provide pupils with two viewings of the programme. The first time was for them to listen and watch the slides. The second time was for completing the worksheets. If they could hear the same thing twice, with the help of the worksheet, I think the overall effect would much better.” Another concern that teachers had was that pupils were not adequately equipped in using IT to learn. One teacher expressed her worry, “I think there was nearly half of the class not able to work out what they needed to search for.... If they lacked the skills, they would simply sit there doing nothing.” The last but not the least problem that teachers faced in using IT was that the hardware might break down at any time which would hold up everything and the lesson would come to a stand still.

Other than the above practical problems reported by teachers, there were more fundamental issues to be resolved in the use of IT in civic education. Based on the observation of the researcher, most participant teachers perceived IT as teaching resources only. They could not further utilise IT as a tool for developing innovative learning strategies to enhance interaction and pupil participation and promote inquiry-based learning in class. Undoubtedly, PowerPoint presentations could attract pupils' attention and could provide substantial and more up-to-date information to pupils in a more efficient way than textbooks. But it is not a guarantee for quality and effective teaching. The two trial lessons taught by the participant teacher who was responsible for IT support for this group of teachers illustrated clearly that the use of PowerPoint did not bring about any change to the pedagogy. The teacher was still teaching in the most didactic way. He talked through the whole lesson with the aid of PowerPoint presentation. Pupils' participation was kept to the minimum.

b. Group work

All except one participant teacher stressed that they were able to conduct group work in their classes. Through group work, they could apply many teaching

strategies introduced in the training workshops, such as problem solving, collaborative learning, group discussions and role playing. They could promote learning and encourage pupil participation. But teachers found that pupils' performance in group work was not satisfactory. Teachers also expressed lack of confidence in carrying out group work in their classes. It was not a familiar pedagogy among the teachers. One teacher said, "After more than twenty years of teaching, we were not used to this way of teaching." Another great problem that teachers faced in conducting group work was the limited time in each class period. One teacher complained, "If there are only 8 to 10 minutes available, it is impossible to carry out the activity. It probably requires the whole lesson. You need to explain briefly at first, with guidance provided for pupils working in small groups. You also needed to reserve a few minutes at the end of the lesson to conclude. In this way, a better learning outcome could be achieved." Moreover, teachers found that pupils were not adequately prepared for participating in the group work. There was not much collaboration among pupils. Pupils were not used to working in groups and were not skilful in expressing themselves and listening to other's opinions. One of the teachers observed, "Even P.5 pupils were not good at working with pupils in groups. They tended to be not very cooperative with each other. In some groups, the group work was often dominated by a smart

but aggressive pupil, unwilling to accept opinions from other members of the group.” Pupils were in general, quite weak in independent thinking and reporting group findings was the least developed skill among pupils.

In the interviews with teachers, the researcher could feel that teachers often did not trust the pupils. They usually thought that if pupils were given the opportunities to work on their own, they would not concentrate on their work or might have problems in completing their tasks. It might also cause discipline problems. Thus everything should be under teachers’ control. Such a mind set prevailing among teachers was not favourable for developing and implementing group work. As a result, learning which required direct experience by pupils such as the development of attitudes, values, and skills suffered. They were often neglected or distorted. For instance, group activities aimed at fostering pupils’ appreciation of the Chinese culture or the natural beauty of the environment usually ended up with the reading of guidelines or repeating what had been prescribed in the text or said by the teachers.

4. Learning outcomes of the lessons

Most teachers expressed their satisfaction in implementing the trial lessons. They found that pupils liked the way the lessons were presented. They thought that the use of a wide variety of learning activities and resources helped to promote learning. To most of them, it was a great improvement from the didactic approach based mainly on use of textbooks for information. They agreed that pupils could learn more and in a more interesting way.

According to the observations of the subject head, “pupils were paying more attention to the lessons” and “pupils showed more interest in visiting China in their writings,” but teachers agreed that they could not change pupils’ attitude in such a short time. It was difficult to ascertain to what extent pupils had developed a more positive attitude towards their mother country. The young teacher reflected that not much was achieved after teaching the sub-theme, the Great Wall but assured the researcher that teaching about the great buildings and architectures in China, would help pupils feel proud of their country. It would have a positive effect on their perception of their mother country. However, the subject head pointed out that some pupils expressed their concern about the harsh measures

imposed by the first emperor in building the Great Wall. The senior teacher also expressed the view that pupils were not performing as well as she expected despite the wide variety of activities that had been designed and implemented.

5. The role of the researcher

Teachers reflected that they could get a lot of advice from the researcher throughout the development of the school-based civic education project. The researcher observed that the follow-up interviews were more useful in maintaining a dialogue with the participant teachers than the preparatory meetings. There was intensive exchange of views on the design and implementation of the trial lessons. Major issues and problems in the development of the school-based civic education project were identified and examined in these meetings, such as the objectives of the study unit and different topics, the use of IT in encouraging a more interactive learning in class, the conducting of group work in large classes, the development of attitudes and values in civic education. It became easier for the researcher to communicate with the participant teachers. The informal structure of the meeting was conducive to an in-depth and thorough review of the trial lessons. Teachers had

ample opportunities to explain the choice and design of the approaches and activities and reflect on the implementation of the activities with the assistance of the researcher.

Conclusion

Results of the lesson observation and follow-up interviews with teachers showed that the development of the school-based civic education project was an innovation to the teaching and learning in the pilot school. Participant teachers, in general, responded positively to the development and implementation of the project. They made a lot of preparation for the trial lessons. Most of them participated actively in the trial teaching of the topics in the three sub-themes. They reported that pupils also showed great interest in the trial lessons. They especially welcomed the use of IT in studying the General Studies unit. But pertinent problems were also identified in the process of the implementation of the project which could have an adverse effect on its development and the attainment of its aims. The findings confirmed that teachers were inexperienced in school-based curriculum development and values teaching. Some of them lacked adequate understanding of the topics and the related pedagogical approaches for teaching the topics. Most of them also were ill-equipped with the skills

for implementing a variety of learning activities in the trial lessons. As a result, there was a bias towards the teaching of factual information. Inadequate attention was given to the values learning, one of the most important parts of this General Studies unit and few opportunities were provided for pupil participation, resulting in a low level of interaction between teachers and pupils and among the pupils themselves. A thorough evaluation of the learning outcomes and the product of the school-based civic education project will be provided in the next chapter.

Chapter VIII

Results III

Evaluation and Improvement of the School-Based Civic Education Project

Evaluation of this civic education project focused on both the “process” and the “product” of its development. Multiple methods were used to accomplish the task. They included group interviews with the children, journal writing by all P.5 pupils and the four participant teachers, a survey on pupils’ views on the implementation of the project, a pre-test and two post-tests on pupils’ attitudes towards the PRC and content analysis of school-based General Studies thematic unit. Results obtained from these methods helped to triangulate the findings of this action research.

Group Interviews with Pupils on Their Views and Perceptions of the Trial

Lessons

Details for conducting group interviews with pupils were provided in Chapter V.

Pupils were asked to provide feedback on three major questions related to the trial teaching. The questions included: What did you learn in the lesson? What did you like

and dislike in the lesson and why? Are you satisfied with your performance in the lesson and to what extent would you prefer to study the other General Studies units in a similar way? But in practice, the group interviews were conducted in a rather structured manner because they had to be completed within the recess time in the pilot school which lasted for 15 minutes only. Pupils also needed more guidance in providing feedback in the group interviews. Thus their views on the trial teaching of the General Studies unit were sought following basically the sequence of the three major questions. They were summarized in the following sections:

1. What did the pupils learn?

All pupils taking part in the group interviews responded they knew more about China after attending the lesson. Many of them could recall what was taught in the trial lessons. They could tell the researcher the location and the historical development of the Great Wall, the provinces and the natural resources along the Yangtze River basin, the teachings of Confucius, and so on. However, some pupils revealed that they had difficulty in understanding the ancient history of China. Some also found that the teachings of Confucius introduced in this study unit were hard to understand.

In their response, it was not clear whether pupils identified more with China through the study of these lessons. On the one hand, pupils were impressed by the great architecture and buildings in China. One pupil said that after studying the sayings of Confucius, she admired him more. She was more determined to be a teacher in future and would follow Confucius's teachings in teaching her pupils. Two pupils also reported in a final group interview that their perception of China had become slightly more positive after studying the unit. On the other hand, some pupils had developed a more negative view of China. One pupil reported that he felt unhappy after learning that a lot of people died in building the Great Wall. Two pupils responded that they were not satisfied with the deterioration of the environment and the frequent occurrence of flooding in China.

In this study unit, participant teachers aimed to foster pupils' sense of national identity through the study of the "best" of China. The focus was more on ancient rather than on contemporary China except in the second theme, the Yangtze River, which included the study of the Three Gorges Dam. It also focused more on the study of the cultural aspects than on the political aspects of the Chinese nation. The understanding pupils acquired in this study unit might not have been

adequate to help them develop identification with the PRC. Their positive images of China, developed through learning the “best” of China, could also have easily been eroded by the negative views they acquired through other sources, such as the media, hearsay from their peers, unfavourable comments from their parents, and so on. These were more powerful and were on contemporary China. Hence, if the project aimed to foster pupils’ identification with their mother country, the PRC, more topics related to contemporary China should perhaps be selected. They were more relevant to the development of pupils’ political identity, which is an important component of their national identity. But the researcher realized that there were great limitations on the time and curriculum space available for a single study unit. Pupils’ ability and background also imposed severe constraints on the selection of content for this unit.

2. How did pupils enjoy the teaching of the trial lessons in the various topics?

All but one group of pupils were quite satisfied with the teaching of the study unit. They especially liked the use of IT in learning the various topics. In addition, they also responded favourably to conducting group work and doing

map work in class though with more diverse opinions on the implementation of these learning activities.

In their opinion, the use of IT brought about a lot of advantages. A major advantage identified by pupils was that teachers did not have to talk so much. They could work on their own in pairs. Pupils also perceived using computer as more “high-tech”. In one of the interviews, a pupil reiterated, “With computer, one can go on-line. There is a lot to see.” He was supported by his peers. One pupil said, “We could look up things ourselves and we should be able to learn more.” Another pupil added, “More up-to-date information could be provided. Textbooks are usually outdated. They were usually printed 2 to 3 years before.”

But pupils were not satisfied with teacher’s tight control of their viewing of the PowerPoint presentation. They complained, “We felt that we were controlled by teachers.... Sometimes, when we hadn’t finished looking at certain things, teachers would skip them and move on too.” Pupils preferred to view the programme by themselves. They also suggested that it would be better if a sound track could be provided in the software programme.

Most pupils said that they liked to have more activities in class. Their common responses were: “More interesting”; “Can learn as a group”, “Interesting experience”, “Feeling nice”, “Not that boring”, “We can talk” and “We did not have to stay inside the classroom all the time.” One of them described how the group work was conducted, “We are to sit around a desk together, to discuss a problem, and then one of us would go up to the front as the group’s representative to talk or write about the group’s ideas.” Another pupil supplemented, “If there are different opinions among the group members, we can choose the best one out...” The use of group work was justified by a respondent, “Sitting there listening to teacher is not learning. To take part actively could enhance learning. It would be clearer and did not need to depend on the teacher.”

One pupil had the following comment: “But it is not very good if we are to discuss in small groups all the time. I prefer to sit on my own. For discussing in small groups, person A talks about his views and person B talks about her views; you might feel unhappy if your views are not being agreed by other group members. Also, Mr X doesn’t really like it if we are too noisy. If Mr X says that a classmate’s opinions are wrong, then he/she might get told off by his/her group

members.”

In another group, pupils complained that group work was seldom conducted.

Reading of maps was not conducted frequently. It was confined to the teaching of the sub-themes, the Yangtze River. The common response from pupils was that they needed more guidance and support in extracting information from the maps.

3. What impact did the teaching of the school-based civic education unit have on pupils?

Contrasting views about the effect of the lessons were provided by pupils, such as, “Nothing special...ordinary...”, “I think this lesson was really special”, “We could learn more, and the things we learnt were really useful”, “I did make great effort to learn” “Not that much. Just help a little further”. But many respondents expressed a wish to visit China to see the scenery of different places after seeing the beautiful pictures presented in the lessons. It showed that the study of the thematic unit could have some impact on pupils’ attitude towards China.

On the whole, pupils responded favourably to the trial teaching of the study unit. This was mainly attributable to the fact that General Studies had previously been taught in a very didactic manner in the pilot school. Teaching was bound by the textbook. Pupils repeatedly stressed that the teaching of the subject was boring. They were given no opportunities to participate in the learning process. It was the first time they could use the computer laboratory to study a General Studies topic. It was the first time they could sit in groups to discuss questions assigned by teachers. It was the first time they could participate in role plays, or sing songs in General Studies classes. It was not surprising that pupils felt happy with the trial teaching of the unit. But the use of a variety of learning activities by teachers who had been completely socialized and programmed to teach in a didactic mode was a great advance and adventure for them. It could only have been achieved by making full use of the opportunities and resources provided by external bodies, such as the Quality Education Fund and with the determination and full support from the school management.

Results of the Questionnaire Survey of Pupils' Views on the Learning of the School-Based Civic Education Unit

After completing the trial teaching of the school-based civic education project, a questionnaire survey was conducted to solicit pupils' views on the learning experience they had in the whole period. The survey contains 14 questionnaire items. It was administered by the participant teachers to all P.5 pupils and the return rate was 100%. A total of 145 pupils participated in the survey.

In analyzing the questionnaire data, the four options "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" were given the values of "4", "3", "2" and "1" respectively. In Q13, the values given to the four options were reversed because the statement was presented in a negative manner. A reliability analysis was conducted and the Standard Item Alpha was 0.8315. This is a reasonable level of internal reliability. The results of the questionnaire survey are summarized in Table 8.1.

A Principal Components Analysis was also conducted with the data set. Three components with eigenvalues over 1 were identified. The eigenvalues of Components 1, 2 and 3 were 4.660, 1.591 and 1.006 respectively. They explained 33.3%, 11.4% and 7.2% of the total variance of the 14 items respectively. Table 8.2 shows the factor

loading of each item and the eigenvalues for the factors. Items with a loading of $>.4$ in Factor 1 are listed first, then followed by items with a loading of $>.4$ in Factor 2, then Factor 3. Significant loadings of each component are marked in italic and bolded.

Results of the Principal Components Analysis showed that Component 1 was mainly related to the development of children's sense of national identity which was the main concern of the questionnaire survey. Component 2 was related to children's interest in and attitude towards the study of China. This was also a major objective of the unit. These two components explained 44.7% of the total variance of the 14 items.

Analysis of the results showed that pupils' overall rating of the lessons was high. All except three items had mean score above "3" which meant that the majority of the pupils were quite satisfied with their learning in the trial teaching of the civic education project. The highest mean score, 3.66, was recorded on Q10: "I like my teachers using IT to teach in this study unit". It confirmed the findings of the interview results that pupils were most interested in using IT to learn in this study unit. Items which had comparatively high mean rating included Q4: "This study unit can help me understand the rich Chinese culture" (3.46), Q1: "I have a better understanding on the history, geography and culture of China after completing the

study unit on ‘The Best of China’” (3.35) and Q5: “The study of the development of the People’s Republic of China in this unit enhances my understanding on my country” (3.26). These results provide clear evidence that the study unit provided pupils with knowledge about China. Both Q6: “This study unit helps me understand that I am a citizen of the People’s Republic of China” and Q8: “This study unit can help me recognize my Chinese identity” also had mean score above “3”. Q3: “This study unit can develop my concern for my country” and Q9: “The study of ‘The Best of China’ helps to promote positive feeling towards China” had even higher mean scores of 3.26 and 3.1 respectively. This is further evidence that the study unit helped to prepare pupils both cognitively and affectively for the development of children’s sense of national identity.

The lowest mean score was 2.42, recorded on Q13: “I still know very little about China.” It reflected that a slight majority of the pupils admitted that they knew very little about China.

Table 8.1: Results of the questionnaire survey of pupils' views on the learning of the school-based civic education unit (N = 145)

| Questionnaire Item | | Mean Score | S.D. |
|--------------------|--|------------|--------|
| 1. | I have a better understanding on the history, geography and culture of China after completing the study unit on "The Best of China". | 3.3517 | .65119 |
| 2. | I have great interest in studying "The Best of China" | 3.0414 | .79823 |
| 3. | This study unit can develop my concern for my country. | 3.1458 | .84430 |
| 4. | This study unit can help me understand the rich Chinese culture. | 3.4552 | .70690 |
| 5. | The study of the development of the People's Republic of China in this unit enhances my understanding on my country. | 3.2621 | .73618 |
| 6. | This study unit helps me understand that I am a member of the People's Republic of China. | 3.1528 | .89536 |
| 7. | I like the teaching methods of "The Best of China" | 3.0694 | .94353 |
| 8. | This study unit can help me recognize my Chinese identity. | 3.1389 | .88981 |
| 9. | The study of "The Best of China" can promote positive feeling towards China. | 3.0979 | .89847 |
| 10. | I like my teachers using IT to teach in this study unit. | 3.6552 | .70098 |
| 11. | The content of this unit, "The Best of China" is very useful. | 3.0690 | .78753 |
| 12. | Upon completion of this study unit, I find that I am proud to be a Chinese. | 2.9930 | .86803 |
| 13. | I still know very little about China. | 2.4236 | 1.0483 |
| 14. | When I sing or listen to the Chinese National Anthem, I feel close to this nation. | 2.8958 | 1.0154 |

Reliability Coefficients Alpha = 0.8315

Table 8.2: The factor loading of the questionnaire items and the eigenvalues for the factors.

| Item | Factor 1 Development of identification with the PRC, the national pride, affection and understanding of the Chinese nation | Factor 2 Interests in the study of China and development of concern towards the nation | Factor 3 Use of IT in the study of the unit |
|--|---|---|---|
| 8. Recognize my Chinese identity | .780 | .104 | -.223 |
| 12. Proud to be Chinese | .768 | .190 | .263 |
| 6. Understand that I am a member of the PRC | .706 | -.168 | 9.864E-02 |
| 14. Feel close to the nation in singing and listening to national anthem | .664 | .344 | -9.842E-03 |
| 5. Enhances my understanding on my country | .554 | .235 | 4.221E-02 |
| 9. Promotes positive feeling towards China | .541 | .147 | 4.650E-02 |
| 11. Content is useful | .472 | .395 | .417 |
| 4. Understand the rich Chinese culture | .449 | .414 | -1.092E-02 |
| 3. Develop my concern for my country | .442 | .548 | -3.286E-02 |
| 7. Like the teaching methods | .127 | .677 | .277 |
| 13. Know very little about China | -.164 | .670 | -2.249E-02 |
| 2. Have great interest in studying the unit | .248 | .633 | .167 |
| 1. Have a better understanding of China | .289 | .509 | 1.931E-02 |
| 10. Like using IT to study | -2.958E-02 | .105 | .906 |
| Eigenvalues | 4.660 | 1.591 | 1.006 |
| Percentage of variance explained | 33.3 | 11.4 | 7.2 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

A Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Besides Q13, there were two other items which had a mean score below “3”. They were Q12: “Upon completion of this study unit, I find that I am proud to be a Chinese” (2.99) and Q14: “When I sing or listen to the Chinese National Anthem, I feel close to this nation” (2.9). The results suggest that the civic education project achieved limited success in promoting pupils’ identification with the PRC. The findings were consistent with those derived from the group interviews.

Results of Pupils’ Journal Writing on Their Learning in the Trial Lessons

All pupils were invited to write reflective journals about their learning experiences gained in attending the trial lessons. The journal had a standard format. It contained six sections. In each section, pupils were given a question for them to reflect on. The six questions were: What did I learn in this lesson? What did I like most in this lesson? Why? What did I dislike most? Why? How was the lesson different from the other General Studies lessons? What did I want to know more about in the next lesson/topic?

How did I perform in this lesson? But the writing of journals was not compulsory. At the end of the trial teaching of each sub-theme, participant teachers helped to collect the completed journal forms. A total of 83 journals composed by pupils anonymously were collected. The journal entries were classified into three groups according to the sub-themes pupils were commenting on. Altogether, there were 34 journals on the Great Wall, 26 on the Yangtze River, and 23 on Confucius. As pupils followed closely the standard format in writing their journals, their views could easily be grouped into six sections according to which questions they were answering. Pupils' views as expressed in the journals were summarized in three tables under the headings, the Great Wall, the Yangtze River and Confucius. They are provided in Appendix N. The summary tables consist of six sections. The number in bracket placed beside a question or a response item indicates the total number of pupils who responded to that question or expressed views related to that particular item. For instance, in Section 1 of the summary table on the Great Wall, there were 64 entries on the first question, "What did I learn in this lesson/topic?" There were more entries than the total number of the journals on this sub-theme because many pupils listed more than one thing they learnt from the lessons or the topics. These entries were grouped under different topics according to the content of the responses, such as (a) Knowledge about the Great Wall, (b) The Chinese nation, (c) Geography of China, and (d) The pain of

people in building the Great Wall. There were 30 entries on (a), 7 on (b), 6 on (c), and 1 on (e). The tables do not list those items with only 1 entry except those which were unique to a particular sub-theme. For example, Topic (e) would be considered unique to the sub-theme on the Great Wall. The tables also have a “Quotations and Illustrations” column for recording the reasons, observations and feelings provided by pupils in relation to their responses given in the various sections.

Analysis of pupils’ journal writing confirmed that the major learning outcomes of the trial lessons were the recalling of factual knowledge related to the three sub-themes. Most of the entries in the first section of their journal belong to this category. These included the history and location of the Great Wall (13), how the Great Wall was built (7), the names of the provinces and cities along the Yangtze River (21), the natural resources along the Yangtze River basin (10), the stories about Confucius, his deeds and life history (17) the sayings and quotes of Confucius (8) and so on. Pupils seldom mentioned any concepts or generalizations attained through the trial lessons. The few items which demonstrated some kind of conceptual learning were “The purpose for building the Three Gorges Dam” and “The central theme of Confucius’s teaching, i.e. “Yan and Yi”. It was also hard to find elements of values learning in the long list of learning outcomes pupils provided in the first section. The only two items found were

“The pain of people in building the Great Wall” and “To appreciate the beautiful scenery of the Yangtze River” However, the researcher could find some unintended values when examining the things pupils disliked about their lessons. For instance, in the sub-theme, the Yangtze River, pupils expressed their concerns that “The building of the Three Gorges Dam and the mining of coal was harmful to the environment” and “Great buildings were built at the expense of the sufferings of the people”. But on the whole, pupils did not write on how they saw themselves as members of the Chinese nation which was the main focus of this study unit. It seemed that the trial teaching had little impact in arousing their national consciousness through the teaching the various topics.

Pupils’ concentration on recalling factual knowledge in their journal writing could have been a result of the way the teachers taught the lessons. Pupils also probably did not want to spend too much time on the journals. Facts could be easily reported but learning outcomes of higher order thinking was more difficult to identify and present.

Pupils welcomed the variety of learning activities in the trial lessons. They showed great interest in using IT to study the various topics of the three sub-themes. They reacted favourably to all kinds of group work and could identify clearly the

advantages of this approach in the General Studies classes. Though there were some negative comments on the implementation of group work by individual children, the majority view was that the approach could bring about more participation and active learning by pupils. But the limited time in a 30-minute session was a big constraint on the development of group work and on the use of IT for interactive learning. In comparing the trial teaching with the teaching of the previous General Studies units, pupils were in favour of the methods and activities employed in the former. They expressed their dislike of the didactic approach which they found boring and textbook bound. The trial teaching was, to a certain extent, successful in arousing pupils' interest in studying China. It was encouraging to see that pupils could provide a long list of topics that they would like to study in future concerning China. A great majority of them also were very satisfied with their performance in the trial lesson. They found that they were more attentive, more interested to learn and most important of all, could take the initiative to answer questions.

Results of Participant Teachers' Journal Writing

Participant teachers were requested to write a journal on their trial teaching of the civic education project. Some questions were provided as a guide for them to reflect

on the teaching of the various topics in the three sub-themes. The questions were:

- 4. Are you satisfied with the teaching of this lesson/topic? What do you like best in this lesson/topic?
- 5. What have you achieved in this lesson/topic? What is the evidence which show that you have achieved these results?
- 6. How would you improve this lesson/topic if you could try it out again?

A total of 12 journals were collected from the 4 participant teachers. They only wrote very briefly on the teaching of each of the sub-themes. Their views were recorded and are listed in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3: Results of participant teachers’ journal writing (N = 12)

| Sub-theme | The Great Wall | The Yangtze River | Confucius |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| The teaching of the lesson/topic | Satisfactory | Good | Very good |
| | Good | Satisfactory | Not quite satisfactory |
| | Good | Very good | Good |
| | Not quite satisfactory | Quite good | Good |
| The part/ session/ activities teachers liked | Introducing the Great Wall | Introducing the regions | Assembly |
| | Comparison of HK and China | Cities along the Yangtze River | Group activities |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| most | Group work: “Where do the dishes and the names of our streets come from?” | Pupils doing web-based inquiry in pairs and small group activities. | Introduction of the sayings and quotes of Confucius. |
| | Small group discussions | Introducing the cities along the Yangtze River | Learning activity: “Finding the themes of the cartoons” |
| Attainment of the lesson/topic | Knowing China through reading maps, appreciate the magnificent building of the Great Wall | Knowing the Yangtze River Valley | Knowing the stories of Confucius, learning his way of treating others and his approach to learning |
| | Knowing the location of China, the Yellow River and the Yangtze River | Knowing the cities along the Yangtze River. | Development of pupils’ communication skills and comparison of the teachings of Confucius through group discussions |
| | Knowing the relief, provinces and cities of China | The geographical location, the natural resources and the major cities of the Yangtze River valley | Understand Confucius’s teaching on “Yan” and “Li” and his ideal in education |
| | The geography of China: relief, rivers and the location of famous cities. The Great Wall and the living of the minorities around the Great Wall. | Knowing the cities and natural resources along the Yangtze River | Knowing the teachings of Confucius. |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Pupils' performance in lessons | Could state the purpose of building the Great Wall, could complete the worksheets and showed appreciation in viewing the pictures of the Great Wall. | Attentive, highly involved in doing the worksheets | Pupils could answer teacher's questions correctly |
| | Attentive. | Pupils could identify the major cities and their characteristics along the Yangtze River, could read analyse information on the cities, showed interest in studying the Chinese culture, doing the worksheet and answering questions | Not quite satisfactory. |
| | Attentive and eager to answer questions | Pupils could answer questions and participate in the learning activities. | Could list out examples of being "Yan", took part actively in the discussion of "Teaching everyone irrespective of pupils' background" and showed interest in the cartoons. |
| | Not satisfactory | Showed interest in extracting information from the maps | Showed interest in the stories of Confucius and viewing the cartoons |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| Improvements to be made | Too much information, quite confused, could reduce part of the content. | Should view the computer programme on Yangtze River by individual classes separately, reduce the number of worksheet | Should provide more discussion time for pupils to compare the education system of the ancient time and HK, should edit the audio tape, should provide more explanation of the term "Spring and Autumn" |
| | Should be more focused, should concentrate on the introduction of the relief of China and the history of the Great Wall. | Pupil did not participate much, Should provide more opportunities for participation. | Should provide more activities for pupils to participate,. |
| | Wall map not satisfactory. | Time was insufficient, should have adequate time for discussions and activities. | Everything was fine. |
| | The playing of the video was not satisfactory. | More on the introduction of the natural resources, pupils not interested in the sceneries of the Three Gorges. | Should cut the part on the introduction of Confucius's home. |

Again analysis of participant teachers' journal writing confirmed that they were more concerned with the teaching of knowledge in the trial teaching. In their journals, they claimed that they could achieve the objectives of the trial lessons/ topics. But what they listed as achievements were all about knowing and recalling knowledge about the

Great Wall, the Yangtze River, the ancient history of China and sayings and quotes of Confucius. There were two exceptions. These were on the appreciation of the building of the Great Wall and the development of communication skill through group discussions. Other than the above evidence of values learning, the participant teachers seldom reported or reflected on the impact of their teaching on the affective domain. They seemed to have completely forgotten that the main focus of the theme, “The Best of China” was to foster pupils’ sense of national identity.

Teachers were very busy with their daily teaching assignments. They did not have time to conduct detailed, comprehensive and in-depth self-evaluation of the teaching of the trial lessons. Hence, their comments on pupils’ performance and the implementation of the civic education project were brief, general and lacking clear focus. Their evaluation of the trial lessons was also superficial and more on the technical problems in conducting activities in class. The lack of depth and focus in teachers’ journal writing might also be attributed to teachers’ inability to identify problems and analyse them because of inadequate understanding in the area of civic education. But for whatever reasons, it had serious implications for the development of civic education in this primary school. It revealed substantial problems in the adoption of the recommended strategy, the permeation approach, for the

implementation of civic education. Without the full commitment of competent teachers taking charge of developing and implementing their own school-based civic education curriculum, it is unrealistic to adopt a permeation approach. If teachers are inexperienced in instructional design and lack the skills in translating the design into practice in both civic education and their own subject discipline, adopting a permeation approach is always likely to remain rhetoric. It cannot be expected to undertake responsibility for preparing effective citizens who could meet the expectations of the government and the society.

Results of the Pre-test and Post-tests on Pupils' Perceptions and Attitudes towards China

To evaluate whether the school-based civic education project had an impact on children's identification with the state, one pre-test and two post-tests were administered. The design and development of the pre- and post-tests were presented in Chapter V. The pre-test was conducted one week before the commencement of the trial teaching. The first post-test was administered one week after the completion of all the trial lessons and the second one six months afterwards. A total number of 145 pupils took part in the pre- and post-tests.

To analyse the survey data, the four options in the questionnaire, “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree” were given the values of “4”, “3”, “2” and “1” respectively. But the values were reversed for items with negative statements and items that might generate negative feelings (These items are in italics in Table 8.4). Reliability analyses were conducted on all the three tests. The standardized item alpha for the pre-test and the two post-tests were 0.8403, 0.8590 and 0.8749 respectively. They showed that the tests achieved a reasonable level of internal reliability. Tukey’s HSD for pairwise comparison was also conducted on the pre- and post-tests results. The results showed that the mean scores of questions 1, 6, 9, 14, 16, 19, 26, 30 were significantly different from one another between the pre-test and the two post-tests. Table 8.7 combines the three data sets obtained from the analysis of the three tests. It shows the mean scores of the questionnaire items in the three tests and the results of the Tukey’s HSD for pairwise comparisons between the pre-test and the post-test 1, the pre-test and post-test 2 and post-test 1 and post-test 2 on items which had a probability below 0.05 that the F value of differences between the three means was attributable to chance.

Table 8.4: Results of the pre-test and post-tests on pupils' perceptions and attitudes towards China (N = 145)

| | Mean Score | | | F Value | Tukey's HSD for pairwise comparisons |
|---|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---|
| | Pre-test (a) | Post-test 1 (b) | Post-test 2 (c) | | |
| 1. I am a citizen of the People's Republic of China. | 3.683 | 3.430 | 3.399 | 6.022 (p<.01) | b<a (.014) c<a (.005) |
| 2. I have great interest to know more about China in other General Studies units. | 3.208 | 3.154 | 3.295 | 1.140 (NS) | - |
| 3. Confucius is the world's greatest educator. | 3.343 | 3.517 | 3.418 | 2.086 (NS) | - |
| 4. I long to visit Shanghai, the largest city of China. | 3.041 | 3.155 | 2.951 | 1.683 (NS) | - |
| 5. The Three-Gorges Dam is a great hydro-electric project undertaken by the People's Republic of China. | 3.213 | 3.259 | 3.336 | .898 (NS) | - |
| 6. If floods occurred in East China again, I would donate money to help my fellow countrymen. | 3.432 | 3.203 | 3.076 | 7.745 (p<.001) | b<a (.035) c<a (.000) |
| 7. Filial piety is a virtue among Chinese people. | 3.743 | 3.708 | 3.628 | 1.463 (NS) | - |
| 8. The landscape in China is beautiful. | 3.193 | 3.372 | 3.406 | 3.184 (p<.05) | - |
| 9. <i>The ecological environment is deteriorating rapidly in China.</i> | 2.382 | 2.090 | 2.206 | 3.663 (p<.01) | b<a (.020) |
| 10. My mother country is the People's Republic of China. | 3.655 | 3.646 | 3.699 | .276 (NS) | - |
| 11. <i>I am not satisfied with the development of democracy in China.</i> | 2.507 | 2.324 | 2.428 | 1.366 (NS) | - |
| 12. I hope I can visit the Great Wall. It has protected ancient China from invasion by other nations in the past. | 3.650 | 3.683 | 3.614 | .311 (NS) | - |
| 13. <i>I know very little about the People's Republic of China.</i> | 2.486 | 2.542 | 2.490 | .159 (NS) | - |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|--------------------|--|
| 14. I like to sing and listen to the Chinese National Anthem. | 3.153 | 2.965 | 2.821 | 4.570 (p<.05) | c<a (.008) |
| 15. <i>I am a Hongkongese.</i> | 1.524 | 1.479 | 1.538 | .159 (NS) | - |
| 16. <i>There a lot of things that the Chinese Government can learn from Hong Kong.</i> | 2.282 | 2.090 | 2.397 | 10.608 (p<.001) | a<c (.013) b<c (.000) |
| 17. Confucius's teaching is useful in helping me solve a lot of problems which I come across in my daily life. | 3.262 | 3.278 | 3.321 | .213 (NS) | - |
| 18. I felt excited when I saw the National Flag of the PRC flying in the Olympic Games Gymnasium. | 3.493 | 3.469 | 3.444 | .137 (NS) | - |
| 19. <i>There are still a lot of illiterates in China.</i> | 2.324 | 2.161 | 1.959 | 51.461 (p<.001) | c<a (.000) c<b (.000) |
| 20. As Chinese, I should be loyal to the Chinese Government. | 3.290 | 2.986 | 2.615 | 18.547 (p<.001) | b<a (.017) c<a (.000) c<b(.003) |
| 21. China has become a strong nation in the world. | 2.441 | 2.430 | 2.324 | .744 (NS) | - |
| 22. I am keen in visiting the historical relics along the Yangtze River. | 3.486 | 3.514 | 3.476 | .098 (NS) | - |
| 23. China is a socialist state. | 2.986 | 2.989 | 2.911 | .407 (NS) | - |
| 24. I am proud of the profound Chinese culture. | 3.250 | 3.124 | 3.007 | 2.791 (NS) | - |
| 25. We should support and not criticize the Chinese Government. | 2.489 | 2.427 | 2.361 | .577 (NS) | - |
| 26. <i>People living in China have less freedom than the Hong Kong people.</i> | 2.486 | 2.106 | 2.161 | 17.745 (p<.001) | b<a (.006) c>a (.012) b<c (.000) |
| 27. I am a member of the Chinese nation. | 3.636 | 3.550 | 3.541 | .722 (NS) | - |
| 28. The Chinese Government has done a lot to improve the livelihood of the Chinese people in these few years. | 3.259 | 2.986 | 2.986 | 4.477 (p<.05) | b<a (.026) c<a(.027) |
| 29. The reunification of Hong Kong with China is advantageous to both the Mainland and the territory. | 3.153 | 3.245 | 3.096 | .973 (NS) | - |
| 30. <i>I will migrate to other countries if I can afford to do so.</i> | 2.813 | 2.662 | 2.539 | 3.437 (p<.05) | c<a (.025) |

Analysis of the three data sets showed that there was, on the whole, little change in pupils' attitudes and perceptions towards their mother country, the PRC after the study of the General Studies unit. It could be concluded that the trial teaching of the school-based civic education project did not have much effect in promoting children's sense of national identity. On some items, there was even a slight drop in the mean scores indicating the development of less positive and more critical attitudes and perceptions among pupils towards China.

The pre-test results demonstrated clearly that this group of children understood well that they were members of the PRC. The mean score of Q1: "I am a citizen of the People's Republic of China" was 3.68, which was the second highest in the pre-test. Similar questions, such as Q10: "My mother country is the People's Republic of China" and Q27: "I am a member of the Chinese nation" were also highly rated by pupils. Their mean rating were 3.66 and 3.64 respectively. It was without question that the children were fully aware of their Chinese national status, even before the study of the unit.

It was not surprising to find that children of Primary 5 were well aware of their Chinese nationality and their status as citizens of the People's Republic of China.

After the handover, there were loud and clear voices in society that children and adolescents should develop a clear sense of national identity. They should be able to identify with their mother country, the People's Republic of China. Through the media, schools, government and non-government agencies, the notion of Chinese citizenship had been widely promoted. Hence, children should have a clear conception of their national status and the relationship of the HKSAR with the Mainland China. This explains at least partly, the high mean scores on items in this area.

The highest mean score (3.74) was recorded in Q7: "Filial piety is a virtue among Chinese people". Pupils' nearly total agreement with this statement showed that they had high regard for this traditional Chinese virtue. Another item also had strong support from pupils; Q12: "I hope I can visit the Great Wall. It has protected ancient China from invasion by other nations in the past" had a mean score of 3.65. These two items were quite different from one another but there was one common thread which linked them together. Filial piety and the Great Wall were among the great variety of things on earth that could best represent China and the Chinese nation. Thus, having realized their Chinese national status, pupils would naturally give high ratings to things which represented China.

Analysis of children's response to other test items in the pre-test showed that there were competing views among pupils on their identity and the PRC. The high mean rating (1.52) of Q15: "I am a Hongkongese" indicated that children still had a strong identification with their local community. The mean ratings of Q16: "There is a lot of things that the Chinese Government can learn from Hong Kong" (2.28), Q19: "There are still a lot of illiterates in China" (2.32), Q9: "The ecological environment is deteriorating rapidly in China (2.38), Q11: "I am not satisfied with the development of democracy in China" (2.51) and Q26: "People living in China have less freedom than the Hong Kong people" (2.49) further revealed that a substantial number of pupils agreed with these negative views on China. They ran counter to pupils' perceptions of their Chinese national status and could pose great problems for them to identify with the PRC.

In fact, the Hong Kong identity has always been a strong competitor to the Chinese identity among Hong Kong people though the former is a regional one whereas the latter is a national one. With the change of status from a British colony to a Special Administrative Region under the sovereignty of the PRC, the Hong Kong identity did not diminish. Rather it was further strengthened because of the strict observation by the central government of the "One Country, Two Systems" principle. Hong Kong

was to maintain her previous systems and institutions for 50 years. She could continue to be very different from mainland China. As a result, the Hong Kong identity continued to flourish and compete with its national counterpart even at the national level.

Examinations of the results of the two post-tests confirmed that there were, on the whole, fewer changes in children's perceptions of their Chinese nationality. There was, on the other hand, a gradual but persistent decline in the mean score of Q1: "I am a citizen of the People's Republic of China", from 3.68 in the pre-test through 3.43 in post-test 1 to 3.40 in post-test 2. Analysis of the results showed that the differences between the pre-test and the two post-tests was statistically significant. It seems that as pupils learned more about China, they may have become more aware of the differences between Hong Kong and the Mainland. This could have reduced their feelings of being part of China. The slight drop in the acceptance for being Chinese nationals among the children could be correlated with some of the changes in their attitudes towards China. For instance, the mean score of Q6: "If floods occurred in East China again, I would donate money to help my fellow countrymen" decreased from 3.43 through 3.20 to 3.06. The mean score of Q9: "The ecological environment is deteriorating rapidly in China" also fell from 2.38 through 2.09 to 2.21. Other items

which had consistent decline in the mean scores in the pre- and post-tests included Q14: "I like to sing and listen to the Chinese National Anthem" (from 3.15 through 2.97 to 2.62), Q20: "As Chinese, I should be loyal to the Chinese Government" (from 3.29 through 2.99 to 2.62), and Q28: "The Chinese Government has done a lot to improve the livelihood of the Chinese people in these few years" (from 3.26 through 2.99 to 2.99). Multiple comparisons on the mean scores of the above items showed that there was significant difference statistically either between the pre-test and post-test 1, the pre-test and post-test 2, post-test 1 and post-test 2, or among the three tests.

Pupils' Hong Kong identity remained strong. The mean score of this item stood at around 1.48 to 1.54. Pupils' intention to migrate to other countries also increased gradually in the two post-test results. The difference between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test 2 on Q30: "I will migrate to other countries if I can afford to do so" was statistically significant. The cumulative percentage for agreeing with the statement went up from 40 in the pre-test to 52 in the post-test 2. It seemed that the development of children's sense of national identity was moving in the opposite direction.

Results of the pre- and post-tests, on the other hand, also provided evidence that the trial teaching of the civic education project had an impact on pupils' learning and could promote a more positive view on China among the children. High mean scores were recorded throughout the three tests in Q3: "Confucius is the world's greatest educator" (3.34, 3.52 and 3.42); Q5: "The Three-Gorges Dam is a great hydro-electric project undertaken by the People's Republic of China" (3.21, 3.26 and 3.34); Q7: "Filial piety is a virtue among Chinese people" (3.74, 3.71, and 3.63); Q8: "The landscape in China is beautiful" (3.19, 3.37 and 3.41) and Q12: "I hope I can visit the Great Wall. It has protected ancient China from invasion by other nations in the past" (3.65, 3.68 and 3.61). After studying topics on the Yangtze River and the Great Wall, pupils developed a better understanding of the development of the hydroelectric plant and were attracted by the beautiful scenery of the landscape of China. But the positive effects generated might not be able to balance out the negative views created elsewhere.

However, it is interesting to note that pupils' ratings remained overwhelmingly positive for Q1, Q10 and Q27 in spite of the impact of negative views about China in society. This showed that the study of the "Best of China" did have some effects in counteracting these views. The decline in mean ratings of their attitudes towards

China might suggest that they were starting to develop a more mature and balanced view on their mother country. They were more aware of problems in China.

Teachers' worries in exposing pupils to the negative views about China are understandable. But pupils learnt negative views not only from the General Studies classes. They acquired them at home, through the media, in chatting with their peers and in taking part in activities in the youth centres. It was unrealistic to ignore the impact of all these views in society by trying to provide only good news and positive images of the state in school, in the hope that by doing so, pupils would identify with their mother country. Hong Kong is unlike Mainland China where the government has complete control of the mass media. Schools have to combat very diverse views and values in society. Teachers have to be alert to these views and should not try to avoid talking about them. They may have to be more proactive and help pupils develop their own judgements and independent thinking in facing these views and values.

Analysis of the Content of the School-Based Teaching Package

To conclude the evaluation of the school-based civic education project, this chapter reviews the final product of the school-based curriculum development. It aims to

investigate whether any substantial changes were adopted after the trial teaching and to what extent these changes were made in the light of lessons learned from the teachers' work in developing of the school-based civic education unit.

One of the major changes was the reduction in the content of the three sub-themes.

This was especially drastic in the sub-theme, the Great Wall. Originally, seven topics were included in the initial unit plan, but this was reduced to five topics in the final version. They were: the Old Dragon, the Home of the Dragon, Finding the Root, the Magnificent Building – the Great Wall, I am a Chinese. More emphasis was placed on the development of pupils' identification with the Chinese nation in this sub-theme.

The last topic was especially designed to arouse pupils' affection towards the mother country. The symbolic meaning of the Great Wall to the Chinese nation was stressed in this topic. With the great reduction in the volume of content materials, more participatory learning activities could be organized to involve pupils in the discussions, web-based inquiry activity, singing of songs, project work and map work. The lessons could also be better structured to allow sufficient time for conducting the various learning activities in a more coherent and systematic manner, without the danger of being truncated due to shortage of time.

There were not so many changes in the content of the other two sub-themes. The topics were basically the same. There was some tailoring of the content of the topics. For instance, more emphasis was on the development of a conceptual understanding of the geography of the regions along the Yangtze River valley, its outstanding features and the importance of the major cities in these regions, and the evaluation of the building of Three Gorges Dam with reference to the impact on the ecology of the region. The more difficult content items were also deleted in the topics of the sub-theme, Confucius. For instance, one of the quotes of Confucius on filial piety was removed, the discussion on the contributions of Confucius to the Chinese culture which involved the study of unfamiliar terms and concepts such as “The Spring and Autumn”, “Yi” and so on were also removed. Again, more participatory learning activities were designed for the different topics. The activity on the debate on the building of the Three-Gorges Dam was redesigned to suit the level of P.5 pupils. Information sheets were prepared to equip them with the basic information and the websites for further understanding the development of the project. The cartoons were also redrawn to make them more up-to-date and more related to the daily living of P.5 pupils living in a cosmopolitan city.

Conclusion

Analysis of data obtained through a variety of methods showed that pupils in general, welcomed the trial teaching. They responded very positively in the evaluation questionnaire, the follow-up interviews and their journal writing on the trial lessons they attended. They especially liked the use of IT in learning the topics of the unit, the use of more interactive learning activities in the trial lessons, such as discussion, pair work and role plays and the study of the Great Wall and beautiful things about China. The majority of them were satisfied with their performance in the lessons. Results of their evaluation of the trial teaching showed that pupils were ready to identify themselves as citizens of the PRC.

The results of the pre- and post-tests confirmed that the trial teaching of the civic education project only achieved limited success in maintaining pupils' perception of their Chinese identity. It did not further enhance their sense of national identity. Their responses to questions related to the development of China suggested that their Chinese identity could be weakened by the rapid developments in society, locally, nationally and globally. Moreover, despite their clear perception of their Chinese identity, pupils' perception of their Hong Kong identity remained strong after the

study of the study unit and they showed a greater eagerness to migrate to other countries in post-test 2.

The development of the school-based civic education project brought about change in the teaching and learning of General Studies and civic education in the pilot school.

Civic education could be taught through a subject in the formal curriculum. But observation of the lessons and analysis of the journal writing of the lessons of participant teachers revealed that the teaching was mainly focused on the imparting of knowledge. Little attention was given to values learning. Teachers' self evaluation as shown in their journal entries was also lacking in depth and reflectivity. The seemingly contradictory findings in the development and implementation of the school-based civic education project identified in this chapter will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter IX

Discussion of Results

Based on the “thick” descriptions of the development of the school-based civic education project as presented in the last three chapters, this chapter discusses the findings of the study with reference to the four groups of questions arising from the literature review, identified in Chapter IV, pp. 87-89. These questions provided the researcher with a framework to reflect on the development of the project with a view to generate “practical knowledge” to inform teachers’ practice in developing and implementing civic education in the primary school. In the next chapter, the researcher will further reflect on his experience in participating in the action research aiming at improving the practice of both the teachers and the researcher in promoting civic learning.

How do the different conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education influence teachers in the development of school-based civic education?

Analysis of data showed that teachers were in general, more influenced by the Chinese conception of citizenship and civic education than by western concepts. The

bias towards a moral interpretation of citizenship resulted in a stress on the inculcation of the “correct” values by teachers. These included traditional Chinese moral values, such as filial piety, honesty, diligence, loyalty and concern for others. But these values were mainly introduced in the pilot school through short talks in the assemblies. It was not evident that the development of these values was a major goal of the study unit. The focus of the study unit was on the transmission of factual knowledge about the “best” of China aiming at developing pupils’ positive image of their mother country. The selection of content and teaching methods for the study unit was in line with Morris’s (1997, p.118) observation that “abstract, non-controversial and established knowledge” and rote learning and memorization was emphasized in civic learning in schools. Similar to Morris’s and Chan’s (1997) findings, the content of the civic education project was “depoliticized” and “decontextualised” and did not include any sensitive topics. The influence of the Chinese tradition was also reflected by teachers’ fairly strong support for the indoctrination of patriotism in school so as to help pupils foster a sense of national identity and to inculcate in them a strong love of their own country, the PRC. This was consistent with the Confucian culture which stressed the importance of collectivism (Ip, 1996).

Moreover, the Confucian tradition had an impact on the way the project was

developed in the pilot school. In a hierarchical school culture, the head teacher who had a strong commitment to developing “useful and civilized” citizens, monopolized the initiation of the project. She set the scene and decided on the area of study. She selected the theme and the curriculum approach after consulting the subject head. She also selected teachers to participate in the project. Teachers’ participation in the initiation of the project was minimal. This was not conducive to the development of a participative school ethos which a school-based approach to curriculum development encouraged and had adverse effects on the hidden curriculum of the school. As noted by Ip (1996), the normative structure of the Confucian moral framework suppresses the ideas of rights and equality and inhibits the exercise of rights and the practice of equality.

On the other hand, the results also showed that teachers were aware of western thinking on citizenship. They realized the importance of participation and independent and critical thinking for citizens. They agreed that opportunities should be provided for pupils to take part in their school life and in the study of controversial issues. Moreover, a variety of activities were designed to encourage more pupil participation in some of the topics. It seemed that though teachers were under the strong influence of the Chinese tradition, the impact of the western views on their thinking was quite

substantial. Kwok (1997) pointed out the “hybridity” of the Hong Kong culture.

Leung (1996, p.52) succinctly summarized its characteristics as follows: “in the peculiar circumstances of Hong Kong, traditional Chinese morality, characterized by the Confucian principle of conscientious fulfillment of one’s station in life in service of the collective interest, was overshadowed by a materialistic and individualist ethos which places the self-interest of one’s family above the common weal of society”.

There are numerous examples of these apparently contradictory views existing in the ethos of the Hong Kong Chinese. They are the results of the 150 years of Hong Kong experience which encouraged the development of a “pragmatic” and “utilitarian” orientation by the Hong Kong Chinese (Leung, 1996).

Teachers in the pilot school are no exception. They also adopted a pragmatic and utilitarian orientation in response to the demand from society for a more vigorous civic education programme. In developing the civic education project, they tried to put all the “good” things together but seldom considered whether they were compatible with one another. Without a clear rationale and coherent framework for drawing on ideas and thoughts from the two different and sometimes contradictory traditions, the content and approaches were often selected arbitrarily and in a casual manner. Hence, they supported the indoctrination of patriotism in schools so as to

help pupils foster a sense of national identity. But at the same time, they agreed that controversial issues should be used for promoting pupils' independent and critical thinking. There was often a mismatch between the topic content, the learning activities and the approach of the teacher in conducting the activities. It was not uncommon to find an activity-based lesson design taught in a didactic manner, a role playing activity followed by recalling of the factual information rather than reflecting on the ideas and values presented in the activity and a web-based inquiry activity become an exercise for copying verbal information displayed in the programme. They were the outcomes of the tension between the two traditions and were likely to have adverse effects on children's civic learning in schools. In fact, Morris (1997, p.119) also observed that "the guidelines were seen to contain a combination of internal contradictions and impractical features".

Lo and Man (1996) argued that teachers have difficulties in arriving at a consensus in developing the civic education curriculum in facing the enormous changes in the HKSAR. To address to these changes, the *Guidelines on Civic Education in Schools* (CDC, 1996, p.15) recommended that the values of collectivism and individualism should be reconciled and stressed that "self-realization is best achieved in common good".

The report on an international comparison on citizenship education conducted by in England and Wales (QCA & NFER, 1999) also observed that there were similar developments around the world. The report found that the citizenship education programmes of many of the South East Asian and Central and Eastern European countries “move from a formal to a more participative approach” (p.16). More emphasis is placed on the development of pupils’ critical thinking, initiative and creativity. On the other hand, Australia seems to have moved in an opposite direction. Citizenship education programmes have become more grounded in a more formal “education about citizenship” (p.15). Thus more and more countries are attempting to enrich their own citizenship education curriculum by adopting “good” practices from other countries or cultures. We are not alone.

But to what extent can the recommendation of the *Guidelines* provide a sound basis for integrating the two traditions? The following description for “Self Realization and Common Good” (CDC, 1996, p.15) helps to provide an answer for the above question.

In the Chinese tradition, even though collectivism has been a dominant social value, self has been seen as the starting point of civic values, as exemplified in

such sayings as 'tuiji jiren' (put oneself in the place of another or treat other people as you would yourself) and 'xiushen, qijia, zhiguo, pingtianxia' (from self cultivation, to family regulation, to county administration, and to global pacification). It is therefore important to see that individual and social core values, rather than being mutually exclusive, are to be seen as mutually supportive and inter-dependent. It is thereby important to see that self realization is best achieved in common good.

In the above quotation, it is clear that cultivation of the self is the means and achieving the common good is the end. The self also has the obligation for treating others as one's self. It is basically a Confucian way of conceptualizing the relationship between the individual and society. The individual values emphasized in the *Guidelines* are similar to what Elliot (1998) called the "progressive rhetoric" in the curriculum reforms. As the two traditions that teachers are facing are based on very different assumptions, philosophical, ontological, educational, political and social, the researcher agreed with the report on *Citizenship education: an international comparison* (QCA & NFER, 1999, p.5), "Careful adaptation, rather than wholesale adoption, should be the watchword".

Realizing teachers' difficulties in developing a consistent framework for promoting civic learning in the pilot school, the researcher attempted to involve the participant teachers in "recursive discourse" in the preparatory meetings and follow-up interviews. It aimed to help teachers clarify and reflect on their own conception of citizenship and civic education. The process and outcomes of the researcher's attempts will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

How do teachers perceive the civic mission of schools and what effects does it have on their role as civic educators in fostering pupils' sense of national identity, and the curriculum and instructional design of the study unit?

The head teacher was most enthusiastic about the civic mission of the school. She envisaged the school not only as a vehicle for promoting pupils' sense of national identity and other important moral values, but also as a platform for developing teachers' civic awareness and the "correct" social attitudes and values as well. That was why she was so eager to participate in this QEF project and gave it her fullest support. She hoped that through participating in the project, her teachers would develop not only the understanding and the skills needed for developing a school-based unit of work, but also the civic values which were essential for both an

active citizen and a dedicated civic education teacher. She believed that with the enhancement of teachers' understanding, attitudes and skills in citizenship, and subsequently their active participation in school, the civic mission of the school was more likely to be achieved.

There was a weak consensus among teachers in the pilot school on the role of the school in training "good" citizens. They agreed that the school had an obligation to develop "useful" citizens for society in which the national community was the most important one. Thus as teachers, they should help to meet the demand of society for developing children who could identify with the PRC. It was most evident in the interview with the young teacher who responded that although she was still not able to identify with the PRC, she nevertheless thought that as a teacher, she should try her best to help her pupils to develop the identification.

Although teachers did not have any difficulty in accepting the civic mission of the school for training "good" and "useful" citizens, they had difficulty in accepting their role as civic education teachers. There was not a subject called civic education in the primary curriculum. In this project, all participant teachers were General Studies teachers. Hence, they could hardly identify themselves as civic education teachers.

Moreover, according to the forgoing analysis in the Chapter VI, some teachers also had problems in identifying with the PRC and most teachers had inadequate understanding of China. These created great barriers for teachers in committing themselves to the “Herculean” task of participating in the civic mission of the school. Teachers’ reluctance to commit themselves to the civic mission of the school was also attributed to their perception of politics. According to Leung (1996, p.60), there is “a strong tendency to avoid politics, a high degree of political apathy, and a pervasive sense of political powerlessness among the Hong Kong people”. As a result, teachers tended to depoliticize the content in developing the study unit and focused on the non-controversial and established knowledge, such as the history and geography of China and the sayings of Confucius on filial piety and education. They tried to avoid talking about issues related to contemporary China. Teachers’ political apathy and lack of interest in the contemporary China were unfavourable to the inculcation of children’s sense of national identity which the project aimed at.

The strong focus on the development of a sense of national identity in civic education also faced other problems in the schools of the HKSAR. With the changing meaning of the “nation”, citizens derived their identity more from participating actively in exercising their rights than from some common ethnic and cultural properties

(Habermas, 1995). Hence, familiarizing pupils with the “best” of China and heightening their awareness of their cultural roots might not have been the best way to promote their sense of national identity. On the other hand, the heavy emphasis on the development of children’s sense of national identity could have had the effect of restricting children’s independent and critical thinking because teachers would tend to concentrate on the positive side of China and avoid talking about the dark side in order to promote among children a more favourable view of their mother country. In their responses to the survey on their perception of implementing civic education via General Studies, teachers revealed that they did not reject the use of indoctrination in fostering pupils’ patriotic sentiment. This is consistent with Habermas’s view that there is intrinsic conflict between democratic citizenship and national identity in the contemporary world. It is incompatible with the development of “a participatory political culture” in the HKSAR (Lo & Man, 1996). As pointed out by Ichilov (1998, p.268), “Citizenship education limited to inculcation of traditional patriotism or conventional nationalist ideology is obviously insufficient in a highly dynamic, complex and interdependent world”.

The narrow focus of the project on the development of children’s national identity could also have had a negative effect on children’s learning in the age of globalization.

The development of their national consciousness and identity could have been at the expense of the development of their sense of multiple citizenships. In our rapidly changing and diverse society, the development of a strong national identity could have put our pupils in a more disadvantageous position and alienated them from the emerging global village. There are numerous examples from the last century showing how destructive nationalism can be. A highly charged ethnic or national identity can be a major source of political unrest (Smith, 1995). There is a risk of developing an uncritical and unconditional love of one's mother country. MacIntyre (1995) even queried whether patriotism is a virtue or a vice. On the other hand, Lawson and Scott (2002) also observed that individuals can be members of a multiplicity of communities. Robertson (1990) and Soysal (1994) further argued that concepts of global citizenship should be emphasized with the globalization of the economy and the development of supernational structures. Teachers in the pilot school seemed to be unaware of global developments, and of the potential negative consequences of placing too much emphasis on fostering children's sense of national identity. Their uneasiness in showing pupils the dark side of China was a clear indicator that they might have over reacted to the demand from society for the fostering of children's sense of national identity.

In considering the civic mission of their schools, teachers can make reference to McLaughlin's (1992) citizenship education continuum which stretches from a "minimalist" to a "maximalist" approach to civic education. They represent the two contrasting views in conceptualizing the civic mission of the school. The former, being thin on civic learning, is exclusive in nature, is basically formal and content led, is characterized by a knowledge-based curriculum which is to be transmitted in a didactic manner. On the other hand, the latter is thick in civic learning, is inclusive in nature, is basically participative and process led, and is characterized by a values-based curriculum to be interpreted through interactions between teachers and pupils. The continuum provides a framework for teachers to reflect on the focus and the scope of the civic mission that they are going to work for. The renewed emphasis on civic education in the *Guidelines* apparently recommends a change from a minimalist to a maximalist approach. This is a great change in the civic mission of the primary schools. But there was no corresponding change in the curriculum structure, or in teacher preparation to support the change. Are schools and teachers well prepared for such a move? There is an urgent need for a thorough debate on the direction of civic education among teachers and educators so that a consensus may be reached. If the recommendation of the *Guidelines* is the direction that civic education in the HKSAR is heading for, there is also a need for strong leadership and support for

implementing the maximalist approach in the primary schools. The next chapter will evaluate to what extent this participative research could facilitate and support the change and contribute to the strengthening of the civic mission of the school.

How does the permeation approach recommended by the education authority affect the development and implementation of the civic education curriculum in the pilot school?

A permeation approach was adopted for developing and implementing the civic education project in the pilot school. The choice was made by the head teacher. Morris (1997, p.115) defined a “permeated” approach to civic education as an approach to curriculum organization aiming to achieve its goals “through the inclusion in and across existing school subjects”. The *Guidelines* (CDC, 1996) argued that this approach could facilitate more authentic learning in rich and diverse learning contexts within the primary school curriculum. It could provide greater flexibility and variation in implementing civic learning in primary schools and facilitate a whole-school approach to civic education. In England, *Guidance 8* (NCC, 1990) also stressed that a permeation approach could integrate civic learning acquired in the different subjects with “the wider work of the school in the community”. However,

Lee (1999) pointed out that a “weak recommendation” for a whole-school approach was found in most schools in the HKSAR, which resulted in the fragmentation of the civic education curriculum. Studies of the implementation of citizenship education in England also revealed that it suffered from low status because of its non-statutory subject nature (SCAA, 1996; QCA, 2002).

The school-based civic education project also had the above problems though it had the full support of the head teacher. The project was developed independently by the project group and there was no attempt to link the theme of this project with the other civic learning experiences of the pupils in the pilot school, such as the themes of the moral education presented in the assemblies and the extra-curricular activities. On the other hand, because civic learning was to be implemented through General Studies, it was under the same constraints as other subjects in terms of curriculum time, the timetable structure, a common teaching schedule, a standard curriculum and a common knowledge-based examination syllabus. Thus the study unit could not last for more than four weeks. The teaching of the various topics had to be confined to a 30-minute session. Different classes had to proceed at the same pace, studying exactly the same curriculum content, with the same breadth and depth, focusing on acquiring the same amount of knowledge as prescribed in the examination syllabus. These

constraints were not favourable to a civic education programme which emphasized exchange of meaning between teachers and pupils and among pupils themselves. The timetabling structure also limited the adoption of interactive learning activities, such as group discussions, clarification and reflection on values, debates and so on. A standard curriculum to be adopted across the groups and a common examination syllabus to be followed by all classes, focusing on testing pupils' knowledge, provided very limited curriculum space for developing pupils' skills as well as their attitudes and values. Consequently, there has been argument about using an integrated subject approach to citizenship education (Cogan et al, 2002; Fogelman, 1997). This approach is adopted in the US and the Mainland China. In HKSAR and England, separate subjects were also established recently in the secondary curriculum to provide more systematic study in this area of learning. But the researcher observed that even though an integrated subject approach is adopted, there is still the need for coordination and support from the other areas in the curriculum in developing our young citizens.

The adoption of a school-based approach in developing the subject curriculum gave rise to other more serious problems. As pointed out by Lewy (1991) and Marsh et al (1990), it was unrealistic to expect teachers to be experts in curriculum development and to redefine their professional role to include the roles of curriculum developer and

researcher. The results of the study found that participant teachers had difficulties in participating in this “social experiment” (Elliot, 1998). They were inexperienced in school-based curriculum development and they also felt inadequate in civic education, in particular in teaching topics on China. They were not trained as subject teachers of General Studies or civic education. Though they had all participated in the seminars and workshops provided by the QEF Project Team, they were still novices in curriculum development and were unable to translate the ideas acquired in the short training course into classroom practice. Their limited understanding of China created further difficulties for them in developing the study unit. Thus most of them fell back on their position as subject teachers of General Studies and thought only in terms of the content knowledge to be covered in the various topics in the three sub-themes. Stenhouse (1983, p.68) was right in pointing out, “No curriculum development without teacher development”.

For Elliot (1998, p.22), curriculum reform was about “changing the ways knowledge was represented in schools to children”. Hence, “centralized social engineering does not work when it comes to effecting fundamental change to the quality of pupils’ learning experiences in schools” (p.20). Teachers have a vital role to play. On the other hand, he also agreed with Stenhouse’s observation that “in school was the

inability of ‘innovatory’ teachers”. He wrote,

Teachers were unaware that their practice, in spite of all the changes many had made to the organization of curriculum content and social arrangements in classrooms, was very continuous rather than discontinuous with the traditional curriculum. (p.24)

The findings of the study were in agreement with the observations of Stenhouse and Elliot. The project achieved limited success in promoting civic learning even though much time and effort was spent in the development of the study unit. The findings also revealed that some teachers were unaware of their inability in translating the “progressive rhetoric” into practice. They could implement a variety of group work activities in the trial teaching but the spirit of the child-centred and participatory approach was missing. As a result, only “surface curricular changes” (Elliot, 1998, p.25) could be effected. Similar to the observations of Alexander, et al (1992) of the primary classrooms in the UK, teachers in the pilot school also perceived a child-centred approach as making concessions to children’s interest. The didactic nature of their teaching approaches remained unchanged. To help teachers realize their pedagogical aspirations and effect change in pupils’ learning through curriculum

development, Elliot agreed with Stenhouse (1983) that teachers should adopt a research stance towards their practice. However, the researcher observed that the ability for curriculum development involves not only technical skills which can be developed through more practice. It also comprises complex sets of skills and understanding related to the disciplines of curriculum studies, educational psychology, sociology of education and the academic subject disciplines to be studied by pupils in the curriculum. If teachers lack the basic training in General Studies or civic education such as the participant teachers in the pilot school, it is hard for them to adopt a research stance and to be involved in the “social experiment”. They will also be reluctant to redefine their professional role to include the role of curriculum developers. Teachers’ performance in the pilot study confirmed the observation of Marsh et al (1990) that teachers perceived themselves as implementers of curricula developed by experts in their fields.

Furthermore, a top-down approach to school-based curriculum development in the pilot school had a similar effect to the “centralized social engineering” approach to curriculum reform. It minimized teachers’ participation in the “social experiment” (Elliot, 1998) and was not conducive to the development of a participative culture. This could have serious implications for the school’s ethos and the hidden curriculum.

According to Lewy (1991) and Marsh et al (1990), a school-based approach to curriculum development can encourage active participation from teachers, maintain teachers' autonomy in curriculum development and promote their self-actualization, motivation and sense of achievement. These are essential attributes of an active citizen but can only be acquired through teachers' active involvement in the school-based curriculum development. A top-down approach to the civic education project discouraged the active participation of teachers.

Elliot (1998) proposed a “negotiated” curriculum to facilitate the development of a continuous dialogue among teachers through an interlocking network of local, regional and national forums. It provides a curriculum framework which allows teachers to redefine and reshape the curriculum to cater for the needs of their school and their pupils. It is also pedagogically driven so that it is easier for teachers to adapt the central curriculum to their own school context. If the renewed emphasis on civic education is not to be another “symbolic action”, the education authority should work towards this direction. This participative research attempted to throw light on how a school-based civic education curriculum could be “negotiated” and constructed in the existing subject curriculum. The experience of the researcher in engaging teachers in a continuous dialogue and promoting a “recursive consciousness” (Elliot, 1998) will be

discussed in the next chapter.

How does the implementation of the school-based General Studies unit affect children's civic learning, especially in the development of their sense of national identity?

Evaluation of pupils' learning in the study unit revealed that the trial teaching was not able to further enhance pupils' sense of national identity. Indeed pupils showed more intention to migrate to other countries in the post-tests. Their identification with the local community, the HKSAR, remained a strong competitor with national identity. Pupils' perceptions of some aspects of China also became less positive after the trial teaching. But children's feedback on the trial lessons was positive. They welcomed the trial teaching. They showed more interest in the study unit than in the other General Studies units.

Analysis of the pedagogical approaches and their implementation showed that the approaches focused on imparting knowledge, based on a transmission approach, paid inadequate attention to the development of values, used a great deal of IT and provided little opportunities for pupil participation. It was in accordance with Morris's

(1997, p.124) observation that civic education teachers in the territory tended to focus on the teaching of “abstract, non-controversial and established knowledge”, employing “depoliticized and descriptive approaches to civic education”. But there was also a wide variety of learning activities in some of the trial lessons. It helped to explain partly why the trial lessons could only achieve limited success in developing children’s sense of national identity but were in general welcomed by pupils.

Results of the study showed that teachers were inexperienced in civic education.

Though they had acquired a range of teaching strategies and methods for promoting civic learning, they had difficulties in translating their understanding into classroom practice. For instance, group work was used only in some trial lessons. Most of the group activities were short in duration and provided limited opportunities for participation and interaction among pupils. Consequently, the teaching was predominantly didactic. Questions were closed rather than open ended and did not facilitate thinking and reflection. It prevented the development of a discourse among pupils in the lessons (Gee, 1987) and was not favourable for the promotion of pupils’ “social literacy” (Arthur, Davison and Stow, 2000) which would have enabled them to understand a range of social issues.

But teachers' difficulty with these areas of teaching is not confined to the teachers in the pilot school. Lo and Man (1996) observed that the transmission approach is still the most common approach adopted by civic education teachers. Braungart and Braungart (1998, p.119) also reported that many of the citizenship education courses in American schools were being criticized as "tedious and boring to students".

Although teachers in the pilot school went beyond the textbooks and used IT extensively to promote learning, pupil participation was limited in most of the trial lessons. It seemed that teachers' behaviours were conditioned by their long tradition of a didactic approach to learning. With a hierarchical school culture, the informal and hidden curriculum was also not conducive to enhancement of "social literacy" and participative citizenship.

The limited success in developing pupils' sense of national identity could also have been attributed to their lack of understanding in civic learning. Bloom (1990) stressed that to enable an individual to identify with the state, he or she must be provided with actual experience, direct or indirect, of the state or some symbolic form of it. These contacts should also bring about actual psychological security to the individual so that the symbols of the state would be internalized by the individual. In the study unit, the Great Wall, the Yangtze River and Confucius were symbols of the Chinese nation. The

study of the various topics on the three sub-themes aimed to help pupils relate themselves to these symbols. In fact, the post-tests results showed that pupils had more positive views on the landscape of China. The results revealed that, to a certain extent, the study did help them identify with some aspects of China. But teachers were not able to help pupils relate these symbols to the contemporary China in the trial teaching. Pupils might not have been able to perceive their relationship with the PRC.

The decontextualised and depoliticized approaches employed by teachers in this unit were not conducive to promoting pupils' sense of national identity. Dynneson and Gross (1990, p.25) stressed that teachers should try to "go beyond the formalism of political knowledge to include the transactions of everyday life". In the trial teaching, there was little attempt by teachers to reproduce and reinterpret the pattern that composes the heritage of the Chinese nation. Teachers were only able to present factual information about the history and geography of China and selected sayings of Confucius. Teachers also did not engage pupils in reflecting on the information presented and relating them to their everyday life. In fact, because of the domination of the didactic mode of teaching, the exchange of meaning between teachers and pupils and among pupils themselves which Alexander (2000) considered vital in learning was minimal. Pupils had difficulties in making sense of the symbols, myths

and traditions associated with the Chinese nationality and in taking part in the reproduction and reinterpretation of these symbols, myths and traditions in the present day context. It posed problems for them in developing identification with the PRC.

Conclusion

The results of the study showed that civic education developed through a school-based approach to General Studies was not entirely successful in attaining its goal in this pilot school, i.e. the development of children's identification with their mother country, the PRC. Difficulties and problems were also encountered in the process of the development and implementation of the project. But the participative research did lend itself to better understanding of some very important issues related to the teaching and learning of civic education, for instance, teachers' conceptions of citizenship and civic education, their perceptions of the school's civic mission and their own role as civic education teachers, the adoption of a permeation approach to civic education via the General Studies curriculum, the teaching of civic values through General Studies topics, the selection and application of a variety of teaching methods and resources for promoting civic learning in the General Studies classrooms and the development of a school culture conducive to the promotion of participation

and learning in the formal curriculum and the fostering of “recursive consciousness” among teachers. The next chapter discusses the experience of the researcher who was also a co-worker and an adviser to the group of teachers in developing the school-based project and examines how and to what extent this participative research could generate “practical knowledge” to improve the teachers’ and the researcher’s practice in promoting civic education.

Chapter X

Conclusion

To conclude the study, this chapter provides a self-reflection of the researcher in investigating the school-based civic education project through action research. It focuses on how and to what extent his participation in the development and implementation of the project could inform and improve teachers' practice in civic education. The findings help to throw light on the role of civic education in developing children's sense of national identity as well as the use of action research in promoting school-based curriculum development in this important area of learning in the HKSAR primary schools.

In reflecting on his experience in this participative research, the researcher found that he could develop a "better" understanding of the development of the school-based civic education project. Working as a co-worker and an adviser to the group of General Studies teachers, the researcher could develop an empathy in understanding teachers' concerns and anxieties in promoting civic learning in the pilot school. The authentic experience in working with the teachers enabled him to identify major problems and difficulties from their perspectives, and to adopt appropriate measures

to tackle these problems and constraints, taking into consideration the teachers' immediate concerns and the actual situation in the pilot school. In his initial encounters with the participant teachers, the researcher found that they were unprepared for the "Herculean task" (Lo and Man, 1996). They did not have a clear concept of citizenship and civic education. They were inexperienced in school-based curriculum development and in implementing civic education through the formal curriculum. With an inadequate understanding of values education, they lacked the confidence in promoting civic values through the subject curricula. In addition, through participant observation, the researcher recognized that there were contextual factors which hindered the development of civic education in the pilot school, such as the low status of civic education in an examination-oriented education system, the hierarchical school culture and the tradition of a didactic approach in teaching. They constituted major obstacles in promoting civic learning and had serious implications for the school ethos and the hidden curriculum of civic education in the pilot school.

To address the above problems and constraints, the researcher attempted to encourage a more active teacher participation in the project though he recognized that there were difficulties in pursuing school-based action research in this marginal curriculum area.

He understood that the participant teachers had difficulty in identifying themselves as

civic education teachers because they were not specialists in this area of teaching.

They also did not have high incentive to further develop the civic education curriculum because of its low status in the primary curriculum. However, as pointed out by Lincoln (2000), inquiry is a process of coming to know developed through participation and intuition. Wang Yangming (1472-1529), a follower and defender of Mengzi and the most influential moral teacher and the leading intellectual of his day, also advocated “the unity of knowledge and action” (zhi xing he yi) and argued, “the true perception of a situation sets into motion whatever action might be required” (Ivanhoe, 2002, p.99). Hence, participation is fundamental to learning. Through engaging teachers in the discussions and debates in preparatory meetings, in the actual development of the teaching package and in the exchange of views in the interviews, the researcher could enhance teachers’ understanding of civic education, its development through a school-based approach and its role in fostering children’s sense of national identity.

To maximize teachers’ participation in the development of the school-based General Studies unit, the researcher tried his best to maintain his roles of a participant observer and a facilitator and left all the major curriculum decision making to the teachers in the preparatory meetings. Through the continuous dialogue and sharing and exchange

of experience and views on the development of the study unit with the participant teachers, the researcher attempted to help them clarify the concepts of citizenship and civic education, deepen and reflect on their understanding of children's civic learning, values education and the development of their sense of national identity. However, the researcher observed that the teachers did not see him as a facilitator. Most of the time, they perceived him as an expert who came to help them develop and implement a better civic education programme on site. As a result, a hierarchy of power developed between the teacher and the researcher. The teachers tended to rely on the researcher to make the final decisions in the development of the project.

The clear division of labour between the participant teachers in developing the sub-themes also reduced their participation in the preparatory meetings. There were seldom heated debates and discussions in the meetings. To maintain an active involvement by teachers in the meetings, the researcher insisted on refraining from giving advice immediately and to guide teachers to refer to the relevant information, principles and issues in connection with the problems in the group meetings. The researcher also tried to redirect the questions to other members of the group to solicit their views on the problems. The strategy worked sometimes. It helped to create a climate for discussion and sharing of opinions. But when the teachers were tired after

their heavy teaching duties in the morning, they did not react positively to this strategy. The discussion was again largely between the teacher in charge of the development of the sub-theme and the researcher. This was unfavourable to the development of “a community of inquiry within the community of practice” (Friedman, 2001, p.168). The problems of the shortage of time and the heavy workload of the teachers have to be addressed if the government is determined to develop school-based curriculum in civic education and to use action research as a tool for the continuous improvement of the curriculum and teachers’ capacity in promoting civic learning in primary schools.

Observations of the trial teaching revealed that a didactic approach focusing on transmitting factual knowledge about China was the predominant mode of teaching. It was not conducive to the exchange of meaning and the development of civic values. But in working with the teachers, the researcher found that they were aware that teaching should be interactive and children should be given opportunities to participate actively in the learning process. Building on teachers’ understanding of the participative mode of inquiry, the researcher attempted to guide them to apply this mode of learning in the instructional design of the unit. Consequently, a variety of learning activities were designed to encourage pupil participation, such as group

discussion, debate and role play. However, because of the long tradition in teaching in a didactic manner and the existing constraints in the school context, teachers had difficulties in implementing these learning activities according to the original design. Participation was minimal in most of the trial lessons. It seemed that the direct experience of the teachers in participating in the development of the project and the continuous dialogue maintained among the teachers and the researcher was not able to effect any real changes in teachers' approach to teaching. Only one participant teacher shared with the researcher in a follow-up interview his successful experience in implementing group work. He reported that the group discussion activity conducted by him helped the pupils develop a good understanding of the topic and at the same time provided opportunities for them to express their own opinions on the development of China. He confirmed that encouraging pupils to participate in learning activities could help to promote learning. To facilitate the participant teachers to translate the instructional design into practice, more guidance and support should be provided in the development of the project. The researcher decided to focus more on the discussion of the "presage" and "process" of the trial lessons in conducting the follow-up interviews with the participant teachers with a view to promote a critical reflection on their perspectives on teaching.

The researcher observed that teachers were inexperienced in promoting civic learning through the General Studies curriculum. To promote a positive image of China, they only focused on introducing to pupils information about “the Best of China”, i.e. the Great Wall, the Yangtze River and Confucius. As suggested by Bloom (1990), to develop children’s identification with their motherland, they should be provided with actual experience, direct or indirect, with the state or some symbolic form of it. Smith (2001) also stressed that to help pupils identify with their home country, they should be given opportunities to engage in the “continuous reproduction and reinterpretation” of the values, traditions, myths and memories which compose the heritage of their nation. Through exchange of opinions and discussions in the preparatory meetings, the teachers were convinced that controversial issues related to contemporary China should be selected for this unit of study to engage pupils in the reinterpretation of the essential values related to the development of China. As a result, a debate on the theme “Building the Three-Gorges Dam” was designed for one of the topics in the sub-theme, the Yangtze River. But similar to other activity-based learning tasks, it was replaced in the trial lesson by a PowerPoint presentation on the pros and cons of building the power plant. This showed that teachers still lacked the confidence and competence in promoting civic values through interactive learning approach in the formal curriculum. There were other activities designed for fostering pupils’ civic

values but they also achieved limited success. More support and encouragement should be provided to foster a change in teachers' perspective on teaching.

In the West, participation has been a concept central to citizenship education.

Stradling (1987) stressed that citizenship education is about participation and for participation. Fogelman (1997) argued that to promote participation, there should be greater emphasis on group work, collaborative learning and community-based learning. In fact, the report of the National Foundation for Educational Research (QCA, 1999) revealed that many western countries, such as the Netherlands, France, Spain and the UK had recognized the need for encouraging active and participatory learning in citizenship education through formal structures and policies. At the same time, many South Eastern Asian countries have also built into their civic education programmes elements of participation. In the HKSAR, many civic educators also observed that the political culture of the territory had changed from a "subject" in the 1970s to a more "participative political culture" in the 1990s (Tsang, 1998), though Morris (1997) expressed his concern about a revision to the former with the increased influence of the PRC on the political system of the region. Children should be well prepared for such a change.

The development of the school-based civic education project in the pilot school encountered a lot of problems and difficulties and achieved only limited success in promoting children's civic learning. But the researcher observed that it did enhance teachers' awareness of the importance of participation in civic learning and initiate some changes in the teaching and learning process. It had a positive effect on the development of a participative school ethos. But teachers should develop the perspective and competence to translate this approach into classroom practices. It is not an easy task based on the researchers' experience in working with the teachers in the pilot school.

Following Giddens's (1984) "theory of structuration", Elliot (1998, p.188) argued that it could not bring about actual change in teachers' practice by changing the system only. To make a difference, he stressed that teachers' "practical consciousness" should be restructured through "the reconstruction of their store of mutual knowledge". That is the development of teachers' "recursive consciousness", the capability to engage in "the process of reflexively explicating the structural properties which shape their 'theories' and practices" (Elliot, 1998, p.183). In addition, teachers cannot work in isolation to improve their classroom practices. They have to be able to engage in discourse with others about their practices and the effects of these practices on

teaching and learning so that they can work collaboratively in effecting change in the system. This action research also intended to promote the participant teachers' "recursive consciousness" through engaging them in a "recursive discourse" (Elliot, 1998) with both their peers and the researcher. The group meetings provided opportunities for collaborative lesson preparation and clarification of meanings and views on the development of the civic education project. The follow-up interviews with the participant teachers encouraged them to reflect critically on the purpose, the development and implementation of the project. They helped to foster teachers' "recursive consciousness".

Teachers need to be fully equipped to be involved in "recursive discourse". With a long tradition of a formal, knowledge-based approach to teaching, teachers in the pilot school had difficulty in reflecting critically on their own teaching. The literature shows that there is always a gap between the civic and classroom culture (QCA, 1999). In this action research, the researcher worked closely with participant teachers throughout the development of the project. They were well supported and guided to take part in "the reflexive self-monitoring of practice" (Elliot, 1998) and the "recursive discourse" with their peers.

The findings of the study showed that some of the problems and difficulties identified in the process of the development and implementation of the project originated from low status of civic education in the primary curriculum. It discouraged teachers' participation in the development of the curriculum. This action research attempted to encourage a more active teacher participation in developing a school-based civic education project. Through working in collaboration with peers, in engaging in discourse with colleagues and external co-workers, in putting theories into practice and in reflecting on their own practices in civic education, the participant teacher could develop "practical knowledge" and competence in promoting civic learning in the pilot school. The multiple methods of data collection also generated rich descriptions on the presage, context, process and product of the development of the project. They helped to inform both the teachers and the researcher about their practices in developing and implementing civic education in the primary schools. The researcher observed that most teachers were more articulate at the later stage of the development of the school-based civic education project. In the group meetings and interviews, they could justify their approach to teaching based on their own experience and on educational theories. They were also able to reflect on their trial teaching and suggested changes to the instructional design and content selection of the initial plan after the trial teaching, though their reflections focused more on the

technical aspects of their design and teaching. It was indeed a good start for the pilot school in its attempt to promote school-based curriculum development and could initiate a continuous inquiry into the meaning and purpose of their practice. The authentic experience teachers acquired in the process of the development of the project could also deepen their understanding of civic education.

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Survey on teachers' opinion on implementing civic education via General Studies

Dear Teachers,

This questionnaire survey aims to solicit your views on fostering pupils' national identity through civic education/General Studies in primary schools. At present, there are different modes of implementation of civic education. In the formal curriculum, General Studies is given the major responsibility for preparing "good" citizens. In response to the demand from society for a more vigorous civic education, the Curriculum Development Council in her Consultation Document on Key Learning Area: General Studies which was published recently proposed to place more emphasis on students' affective development. The Document points out that affective education which includes the development of national identity and concern for Chinese culture is inadequate in the General Studies syllabus. It stresses the need to strengthen "elements related to national identity and understanding of the Chinese culture" (CDC, 2000, p. 3) in the subject curriculum. But what exactly are these elements? It is essential that a common understanding on this curriculum area should be developed among teachers, curriculum developers and educators in the HKSAR to ensure its effective implementation in school. The present study focuses on investigating how you, as teachers of civic education or General Studies, think civic education should be designed, structured and taught in relation to the enhancement of national consciousness and sense of national identity among primary pupils. The findings would be most useful for us, as teacher educators and curriculum developers, in reviewing the civic education/General Studies curriculum and developing instructional materials which will address the needs of society and teachers in this key learning area. Your input would be most valuable to our basic education in helping to prepare our young citizens.

Thank you very much in anticipation for your contribution to the improvement of this key learning area!

This questionnaire is divided into two parts.

The first part contains 20 questionnaire items. They are all items on the nature, objectives, content, and implementation of civic education in relation to the fostering of national identity in primary schools in the HKSAR.

The second part contains questions on your own personal particulars. They are particularly useful in providing us further information for analysing the results of the questionnaire survey.

Part I

Please read the following statements carefully and indicate your views by ticking in the appropriate boxes.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| | | | | 5 4 3 2 1 | |
| 1. Civic education in the HKSAR primary schools should aim at developing patriotic citizens who love and support their mother country, the People’s Republic of China (PRC). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Encouraging pupils to participate in the local community is an effective way of promoting pupils’ identification with the state, PRC. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Civic education should stress on developing pupils’ independent and critical thinking. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. To foster positive attitudes towards the PRC, pupils’ understanding of the history, geography and culture of China should be enhanced. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. There is adequate curriculum space in the Hong Kong primary school curriculum for implementing a participatory and child-centred civic education programme. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. My school has been actively promoting pupils’ understanding and concern for their mother country, the PRC. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. The most effective means of fostering pupils' national identity is to arouse their national sentiment and to inculcate among them a strong love of their own country, the PRC. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
8. As a General Studies teacher, I can help my pupils develop good understanding of China because I know my country well. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
9. My school can provide a variety of learning experience to help pupils identify with their nation. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
10. To develop a critical understanding of China among primary pupils is more important than to foster an unconditional love of the Chinese nation in the HKSAR. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
11. Civic education can be implemented via General Studies because there is a substantive amount of civic learning elements in the existing General Studies curriculum. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
12. Pupils should be taught the major developments accomplished by the PRC since 1949 to maintain among themselves a positive image of their home country. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
13. Patriotism should be indoctrinated to help to foster pupils' sense of national identity. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
14. Primary pupils should be given the opportunities to investigate controversial issues related to contemporary China, such as the June Fourth Incident, the Cultural Revolution, the Independence of Taiwan, etc. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
15. To heighten pupils' national sentiment, all major school functions should begin with the singing of the national anthem and/or the flying of the national flag. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
16. The study of major controversial issues in the HKSAR is ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

conducive to the development of pupils' identification with both the local and national community.

- 17 I have a good understanding of values education and can help pupils develop the ability in making independent values judgement. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
18. The strong emphasis on the study of local community can help pupils identify with the society. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
19. The HKSAR primary schools should model themselves on counterparts in the mainland in introducing ethics and character education in the formal curriculum. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
20. To develop pupils' identification with the state, we should first help our pupils develop a sense of belonging to the local community. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Part II

My personal particulars

Sex: *Male/Female

Age: *under 25/ 25-40/ 40-50/ over 50

Years of teaching experience: *under 5/ 5-20/ 21-30/ over 30 years

Experience in teaching General Studies: *Yes/ No

Experience in teaching Civic Education: *Yes/ No

Training in teaching General Studies: *Yes/ No

Training in teaching Civic Education: *Yes/ No

Qualifications: *Certificate in Teacher Education/ Bachelor in Education/
Postgraduate Diploma in Education

Post: *Class Teacher/ Panel Chair of General Studies /Panel Chair of Civic Education

Please delete as appropriate.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Pre-test on pupils’ attitudes towards China

This instrument is designed to evaluate pupils’ attitudes towards China.. It is to be administered before the teaching of the General Studies unit, The Best of China. Pupils are required to read the statements presented and respond whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree to these statements. The format of the questionnaire is presented as follows:

Dear pupils,

The General Studies teachers would like to know your opinions on the following statements. They are all related to China. Please read them very carefully and indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree to these statements by ticking in the appropriate boxes. You don’t have to put down your names but you are required to respond honestly.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I am a citizen of the People’s Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I have great interest to know more about China in other General Studies units. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Confucius is the world’s greatest educator. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I long to visit Shanghai, the largest city of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. The Three-Gorges Dam is a great hydro-electric project undertaken by the People’s Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. If floods occurred in East China again, I would donate money to help my fellow countrymen. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Filial piety is a virtue among Chinese people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. The landscape in China is beautiful. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. The ecological environment is deteriorating rapidly in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. My mother country is the People’s Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. I am not satisfied with the development of democracy in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I hope I can visit the Great Wall. It has protected ancient China from invasion by other nations in the past. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. I know very little about the People’s Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 14. I like to sing and listen to the Chinese National Anthem. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. I am a Hongkongese. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. There a lot of things that the Chinese Government can learn from Hong Kong. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Confucius's teaching is useful in helping me solve a lot of problems which I come across in my daily life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. I felt excited when I saw the National Flag of the PRC flying in the Olympic Games Gymnasium. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. There are still a lot of illiterates in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. As Chinese, I should be loyal to the Chinese Government. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. China has become a strong nation in the world. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. I am keen in visiting the historical relics along the Yangtze River. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. China is a socialist state. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. I am proud of the profound Chinese culture. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. We should support and not criticize the Chinese Government. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. People living in China have less freedom than the Hong Kong people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. I am a member of the Chinese nation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. The Chinese Government has done a lot to improve the livelihood of the Chinese people in these few years. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. The reunification of Hong Kong with China is advantageous to both the Mainland and the territory. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. I will migrate to other countries if I can afford to do so. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Post-test 1 on pupils' attitudes towards China

This instrument is designed to evaluate pupils' attitudes towards China.. It is to be administered immediately after the teaching of the General Studies unit, The Best of China. Pupils are required to read the statements presented and respond whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree to these statements. The format of the questionnaire is presented as follows:

Dear pupils,

The General Studies teachers would like to know your opinions on the following statements. They are all related to China. Please read them very carefully and indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree to these statements by ticking in the appropriate boxes. You don't have to put down your names but you are required to respond honestly.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Confucius is the world's greatest educator. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I have great interest to know more about China in other General Studies units. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. China has become a strong nation in the world. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. If there were floods occurred in East China again, I would donate money to help my fellow countrymen. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. The Three-Gorges Dam is a great hydro-electric project undertaken by the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. The ecological environment is deteriorating rapidly in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Filial piety is a virtue among Chinese people.. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I am not satisfied with the development of the legal system and democracy in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. The Chinese Government has done a lot to improve the livelihood of the Chinese people in these few years. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. My home country is the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. The landscape in China is beautiful. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. I hope I can visit the Great Wall which has protected the Chinese nation from invasion by other nations in | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- the past..
- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. I know very little about the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. I like to sing and listen to the Chinese National Anthem. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. I am a Hongkongese. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. I felt excited when I saw the National Flag of the PRC flying in the Olympic Games Gymnasium. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Confucius's teaching is useful in helping me solve a lot of problems which I come across in my daily life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. There are still a lot of illiterates in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. I am proud of the profound Chinese culture. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. I am a citizen of the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. There a lot of things that the Chinese Government can learn from Hong Kong. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. I am keen in visiting the historical relics along the Yangtze River. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. As Chinese, I should be loyal to the Chinese Government. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. The reunification of Hong Kong with China is advantageous to both the Mainland and the territory. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. We should support and not criticize the Chinese Government. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. China is a socialist state. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27, People living in China have less freedom than the Hong Kong people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. I am a member of the Chinese nation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. I long to visit Shanghai, the largest city of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. If I have the chance, I will migrate to other country for good. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Post-test 2 on pupils' attitudes towards China

This instrument is designed to evaluate pupils' attitudes towards China.. It is to be administered six months after the teaching of the General Studies unit, The Best of China. Pupils are required to read the statements presented and respond whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree to these statements. The format of the questionnaire is presented as follows:

Dear pupils,

The General Studies teachers would like to know your opinions on the following statements. They are all related to China. Please read them very carefully and indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree to these statements by ticking in the appropriate boxes. You don't have to put down your names but you are required to respond honestly.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. My home country is the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. China has not given sufficient attention to the protection of environment. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. The Great Wall is a great building of ancient China. It has protected the Chinese nation from invasion by other nations in the past. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Filial piety is a virtue among Chinese people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. There a lot of things that the Chinese Government can learn from Hong Kong. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. The Three-Gorges Dam is a great hydro-electric power project undertaken by the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. China has become a strong nation in the world. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I am worry about the development of the legal system and democracy in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I long to visit Shanghai, the largest city of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Confucius is the world's greatest educator. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. We should not criticize the Chinese Government. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. If there were floods occurred in East China again, I would donate money to help my fellow countrymen. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. I know very little about the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. I like to sing and listen to the Chinese National Anthem. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. I am a Hongkongese. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. I felt excited when I saw the National Flag of the PRC flying in the Olympic Games Gymnasium. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Confucius's teaching is useful in helping me solve a lot of problems which I come across in my daily life. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. There are still a lot of illiterates in China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. I am proud of the profound Chinese culture. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. China is ruled by a communist regime. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. I have great interest to know more about China in other General Studies units. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. I am a member of the Chinese nation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. The reunification of Hong Kong with China is advantageous to both the Mainland and the territory. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. The landscape in China is beautiful. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. I am a citizen of the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. People living in China have less freedom than the Hong Kong people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. I am keen in visiting the historical relics along the Yangtze River. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. The Chinese Government has done a lot to improve the livelihood of the Chinese people in these few years. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. As Chinese, I should be loyal to the Chinese Government. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. If I have the chance, I will migrate to other country for good. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

My view on the teaching and learning of the Unit on The Best of China

(This instrument is designed to solicit pupils' views on their experience in studying the General Studies unit. It is to be administered immediately after the teaching of the unit. Pupils are required to read the statements presented and respond whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree to these statements.)

The General Studies teachers would like to know your opinions on the following statements. They are all related to teaching and learning of the unit on The Best of China. Please read them very carefully and indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree to these statements by ticking in the appropriate boxes. You don't have to put down your names but you are required to respond honestly.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I have a better understanding on the history, geography and culture of China after completing the study unit on "The Best of China". | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I have great interest in studying "The Best of China". | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. This study unit can develop my concern for my country. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. This study unit can help me understand the rich Chinese culture. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. The study of the development of the People's Republic of China in this unit enhances my understanding on my country. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. This study unit helps me understand that I am a member of the People's Republic of China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I like the teaching methods of "The Best of China" | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. This study unit can help me recognize my Chinese identity. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. The study of "The Best of China" can promote positive feeling towards China. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I like my teachers using IT to teach in this study unit. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11. The content of this unit, “The Best of China” is very useful.

☐☐☐☐
12. Upon completion of this study unit, I find that I am proud to be a Chinese.

☐☐☐☐
13. I still know very little about China.

☐☐☐☐
14. When I sing or listen to the Chinese National Anthem, I feel being close to this nation.

☐☐☐☐

Lesson Observation Protocol

School: Precious Blood Ng Kwai Ming Memory Primary School

Teacher: Mr./Ms

Post:

Topic: The Best of China: The Great Wall Class: 5A Date: 31 Oct 00

| Focus of Observation | Description and Analysis |
|--|--------------------------|
| Objectives 1. What are the objectives? 2. To what extent are they relevant to the topic, to pupils' daily life, to the development of civic virtues and competence as citizen of the HKSAR, to promote their sense of national identity? 3. Can the objectives chosen provide a balanced and holistic learning experience to pupils which matches with their ability and needs? 4. Are the objectives likely to be achieved in the existing classroom setting? | |
| Content 1. Is the content chosen consistent with the objectives? 2. Is the content relevant to pupils' developmental needs? Is it of appropriate breadth and depth? 3. To what extent is the content • Interesting | |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ linked to pupils' daily experience◦ integrated◦ coherent◦ organized in a logical manner◦ conducive to the development of multiple perspectives among pupils◦ accurate and up-to-date◦ catered for individual needs and development? | |
| <p>The Teaching and Learning Process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are the major learning tasks/ activities conducted in class?2. What are the teaching strategies and approaches selected as reflected in the learning activities implemented? Are they appropriately chosen taken into consideration of the school context and pupils' background?3. How are the learning activities structured? Have they incorporated the following essential approaches to civic education: | |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-centred • Participatory <p>4. How are the activities sequenced? Are they closely linked with one another to provide a coherent learning experience to pupils?</p> <p>5. How are the activities implemented and organized in class? Can they provide a meaningful and systematic learning process to pupils?</p> <p>6. How do pupils participate in class/ learning tasks/ activities?</p> <p>7. What are the resources used in class? Are they relevant and appropriately used to enhance learning?</p> <p>8. How is the learning environment structured? Is it supportive to the implementation of major teaching strategies and learning activities in the classroom?</p> | |
|--|--|

Interview Protocol for Head Teacher in the Pilot School

(This is a semi-structured interview guide aiming at soliciting the view of the head teacher on civic education, the development and implementation of the this important curriculum area in the pilot school and her expectation in joining the QEF project. It is conducted before the commencement of the project.)

1. Why does your school participate in this project? What is your expectation in joining this project?
2. What is your view on civic education?
3. What role should primary schools play in promoting children's national identity?
4. How did your school develop and implement civic education?
5. What major achievements has your school achieved in this important area of learning?
6. What are the major difficulties in developing and implementing civic education in your school?
7. What help would you expect from the project team in the development of the school-based civic education study unit?

Interview Protocol 1 for General Studies Teachers Involve in the Project

(This is a semi-structured interview guide aiming at soliciting teachers' view on their perception of civic education and the development and implementation of the school-based civic education programme. It is administered to all the four General Studies teachers involved in the project in their first interview.)

1. What do you think are the essential qualities of a good citizen? To what extent do you agree that good citizens should develop a strong sense of national identity and be loyal to their mother country?
2. What role should the school play in preparing "good" citizens for the state?
3. What should be the goal of civic education? What are the essential elements of a primary civic education programme? Why should these elements be included?
4. Do you agree that there should be an independent subject called civic education in the primary school curriculum? How should civic education be developed in the primary school curriculum? What do you think are the more effective curriculum approaches for developing and implementing civic education in the primary schools?
5. To what extent do you think General Studies can play the role of promoting civic education in the primary curriculum? To what extent do you think it is successful in playing its role?
6. What learning activities do you usually conduct in civic education or General Studies lessons? How effective do you think they can help to achieve their objectives in the preparation of "good" citizens for the HKSAR?
7. Why do you participate in this project? What is your contribution in the design and development of the teaching package? To what extent are you satisfied with your participation in the project?
8. What are the major constraints in implementing civic education in Hong Kong primary schools? What are the major difficulties in developing the teaching package?

Interview Protocol 2 for General Studies Teachers Involve in the Project

(This is a semi-structured interview guide aiming at soliciting teachers' view on their trial lessons. It is administered to all the four General Studies teachers involved in the project in their first interview.)

1. Are you satisfied with the teaching of this lesson/topic? What do you like best in this lesson/topic?

2. What did you aim to achieve in this lesson/topic? What teaching strategies did you used in teaching this lesson/topic? Why?

3. To what extent do you think you have achieved the aims of this lesson/topic? What evidences are there to show that you have achieved your aims?

4. What are the major difficulties and constraints for developing and implementing this lesson/topic? What changes would you suggest to solve the problems you encountered in the trial teaching?

5. How would you improve in this lesson/topic if you could try it out again?

Group Interview Protocol for Primary 5 Pupils

- 1. What did you learn in the lesson?**
- 2. How did you learn the above content items?**
- 3. What did you like in the lesson you have just attended? Why did you like them?**
- 4. Were there any things you dislike in this lesson? Why did you dislike these things?**
- 5. Did you find any difficulties in learning this topic? What were the problems?**
- 6. In what ways was this lesson different from the previous General Studies lessons?**
- 7. Were you satisfied with your performance in this lesson?**

My diaries on the teaching of the General Studies Unit: The Best of China

(Teachers involved in the teaching of the Unit are requested to keep their own diaries during the try out period of the school-based civic education unit. The qualitative data provided by teachers through their self-reflections and observations of the learning process can help to illuminate the characteristics of the Unit and teachers' perceptions in civic education)

Topic: _____ Class: 5() Date: _____

Questions for reflection:

1. Are you satisfied with the teaching of this lesson/topic? What do you like best in this lesson/topic?

2. What have you achieved in this lesson/topic? What are the evidences which show that you have achieved these results?

3. How would you improve in this lesson/topic if you could try it out again?

My Opinion on the General Studies Lesson

Topic: _____ Class: 5(_____) Date: _____

1. In the lesson(s), I have learnt

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. In the lessons, the part(s) that I like most is/are

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Reasons:

3. The part(s) that I do not like is/are.....

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. The major differences between the teaching of this unit and that of the previous ones are:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

5. I like to know more about the following topics in the next unit:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Reasons:

6. I think my performance in this topic is:

☐ Very Good ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Less Satisfactory ☐ Room for improvement

Summary of pupils' journal entries on the three sub-themes

I. The Great Wall (N = 34)

| Section | Quotations/Illustrations |
|--|---|
| <p>1. What I learnt in this lesson: (64)</p> <p>a. Knowledge about the Great Wall (30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The history and location of the Great Wall (13) • The purpose of the Great Wall (6) • The outlook of the Great Wall (5) • How the Great Wall was built (7) <p>b. The Chinese nation (7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing the different ethnic groups in China (1) <p>c. Geography of China (6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landforms of China (2) • Number of provinces in China (1) <p>e. The pain of people in building the Great Wall (1)</p> | |
| <p>2. What I liked most in this lesson: (54)</p> <p>a. Content items (23)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Wall (9) • The Nine Dragon Wall in Beijing (1) | <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most marvelous architecture in China • Full of Chinese characteristics |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Palace in Beijing (1) <p>b. Teaching methods and learning activities (29)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using IT to learn (9) • Small group discussion (9) • Singing of song (5) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A great building • Could develop IT skills, the first time to study General Studies using IT, could see real pictures • Did not try this activity before, could share ideas, could apply one skills • Nice to hear |
| <p>3. What I disliked in this lesson: (35)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content items (5) • Lessons too short (2) • Group members not cooperate during discussions (2) • Group discussions (2) • Computers controlled by teacher (1) • Listen to teacher talk (2) | |
| <p>4. How the teaching of this unit was different from the other General Studies units (58)</p> <p>a. Learning activities (47)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning through IT (17) • Small group discussions (8) • Did without the textbook (6) • Activity-based (2) | |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need to sit inside the classroom (2) • Previously sat in rows, this lesson sat in groups (1) • No need to stay in the classroom all the time (1) • Knowing the history of China through simulated travel (1) <p>b. Study of China (11)</p> | |
| <p>5. Topics that I liked to learn in the next unit: (54)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great figures in China (12) • History of China (8) • The Yellow River (7) • The Chinese nation (3) • The Silk Road (2) | <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • want to know more about China, I'd like to understand the experience of those great figures • To learn more about China • Feel interested, I am a Chinese, I want to know my country • Did not have much understanding • I find it interesting |
| <p>6. How I performed in this lesson: (34)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good (4) • Satisfactory (26) | <p>Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very interested in things in China, content well presented, could learn more on China • Paid attention to teacher, I could take initiation to answer questions |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not quite satisfactory (4) | <p>which I had not done before, I could cooperate well with other members, teacher explained in great details, more interesting than the conventional approaches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I found civic education boring, some confusion in the teaching of the topic on Mongolia |
|--|--|

II. The Yangtze River (N = 26)

| Section | Quotations/Illustrations |
|--|--------------------------|
| <p>1. What I learnt in this lesson: (58)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The names of the provinces and cities along the Yangtze River (21) • The natural resources along the Yangtze River basin (10) • Yangtze River is divided into upper, middle and lower streams (6) • The purpose for building the Three Gorges Dam (3) • The local food and products of different places along Yangtze River (3) • To appreciate the beautiful sceneries of the Yangtze River (3) | |
| <p>2. What I liked most in this lesson: (31)</p> | <p>Reasons:</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>a. Content items (12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Great Wall (4) • Big cities along the river (3) <p>b. Teaching methods and activities (10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of IT to learn (3) • Small group discussion (2) • IT game on the Three Gorges Dam.(1) • Reading charts and maps (2) • Doing worksheets (1) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient great building • Knowing places in China with beautiful sceneries • As Chinese, we should know more about China. • New to pupils, could build a data bank, know the characteristics of the provinces along the Yangtze River. • Know more about the cities along the Yangtze River • New approach to learning • Could increase knowledge |
| <p>3. What I disliked in this lesson: (33)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not sufficient time (2) • Pictures not clear enough (2) • Progress of teaching much slower (2) • Great confusion during learning activities (1) • Seeing people living around the Three Gorges Dam had to leave their homes (1) • The houses and crops covered by water | |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building of the Three Gorges Dam and the mining of coal was harmful to the environment (1) • Great buildings were built at the expense of the sufferings of the people (1) | |
| <p>4. How the teaching of this unit was different from the other General Studies units (49)</p> <p>a. Learning activities (35)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of IT (17) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better than textbook (2) - Could play IT games (3) - Viewing from the screen (1) • Conducting small group discussions (11) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could work in groups to find out answers to teacher's questions (3) - Should have team spirit and be cooperative (2) <p>b. Content of teaching (14)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge outside textbooks • More on the history and important events of China | |
| <p>5. Topics that I liked to learn in the next unit: (46)</p> | <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the origin of the Chinese |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Yellow River draining system and the land resources (9) • Famous people and great historical figures (7) • History of China (6) • The Chinese nation (2) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nation, one of the three main rivers in China, • Helpful in understanding ancient China • Being curious • To be well equipped of the knowledge about own country |
| <p>6. How I performed in this lesson: (26)</p> <p>a. Very good (5)</p> <p>b. Satisfactory (21)</p> <p>c. Not quite satisfactory (4)</p> | <p>Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in the topics, very attentive, could use IT and worked in groups • Not serious in doing worksheets, too much hurry, some confusions arose, interesting, using of IT more easily to learn • Frequent quarrel with neighbour, • Time was not sufficient |

III. Confucius (N = 23)

| Section | Quotations/Illustrations |
|---|--------------------------|
| <p>1. What I learnt in this lesson: (51)</p> <p>a. The stories about Confucius, his deeds and life history (17)</p> <p>b. Sayings and quotes of Confucius (8)</p> | |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>c. The teachings of Confucius on education (6)</p> <p>d. The home of Confucius (5)</p> <p>e. The central theme of Confucius's teaching, i.e. Yan and Yi (3)</p> | |
| <p>2. What I liked most in this lesson: (28)</p> <p>a. Teaching methods and activities (15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentations (6) • Small group discussion (3) • Role playing (2) <p>b. Content items (10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the teachings of Confucius (4) • Learn how to behave (1) | <p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced, more authentic • Could discuss and share ideas with peers • It was fun to role play • Knew more about Confucius, I admired him, they were the main points of Confucius's teaching • As a person, we should know |
| <p>3. What I disliked most in this lesson: (15)</p> <p>a. Group members did not cooperate (2)</p> <p>b. Doing the worksheets (2)</p> <p>c. Content items (2)</p> <p>d. Time was not sufficient (1)</p> <p>e. Reading the pictures (1)</p> | |
| <p>4. How the teaching of this unit was different from the other General Studies units (51)</p> <p>a. Teachers using IT to teach (11)</p> | |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>b. In-depth study on China (9)</p> <p>c. Project learning (5)</p> <p>d. Small group discussions (4)</p> <p>e. More interesting and lively (4)</p> <p>f. Not bounded by textbooks (3)</p> | |
| <p>5. Topics that I liked to learn in the next unit: (47)</p> <p>a. Great persons in both the ancient and contemporary China (27)</p> <p>b. History, geography and culture of China (13)</p> | |
| <p>6. How I performed in this lesson: (23)</p> <p>a. Very good (5)</p> <p>b. Satisfactory (21)</p> <p>c. Not quite satisfactory (4)</p> | <p>Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very attentive, lesson interesting, understand the lesson • Quite attentive, cooperated with peers, learning lively • Not interested, not quiet, did not answer questions |

